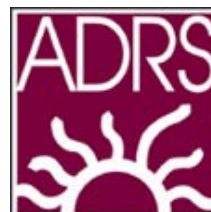
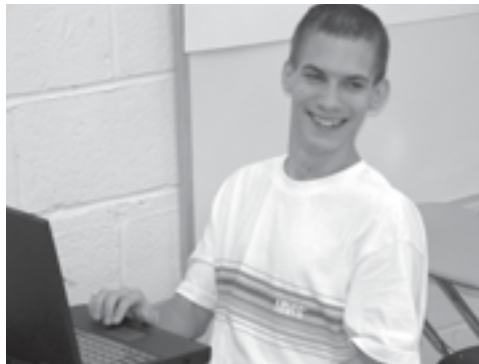
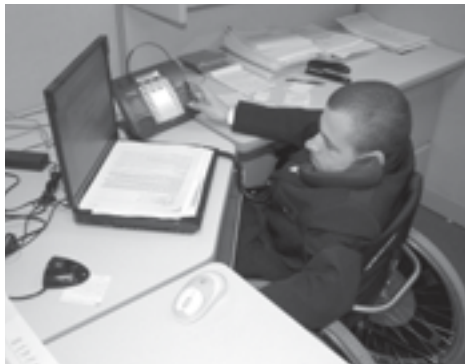


TOGETHER, SUCCESS ...

at home, at school, at work



Alabama Department of
REHABILITATION SERVICES
Annual Report 2004

BLUEPRINT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

MISSION: TO ENABLE ALABAMA'S CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES TO ACHIEVE THEIR MAXIMUM POTENTIAL

We VALUE the worth, dignity and rights of people with disabilities and we will:

- provide an easily accessible, integrated continuum of services;
- ensure quality services that are family-centered, culturally sensitive and community-based;
- promote and respect consumer choice regarding provision of services;
- advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities and promote self-advocacy;
- include people with disabilities, their families and advocates in agency planning and policy development.

We VALUE independence and meaningful work for people with disabilities and we will:

- educate families, children, employers, schools and the public that people with disabilities can and do work;
- advocate for quality health services and community supports that enable people with disabilities to work and/or function independently;
- develop, maintain and expand working relationships with employers;
- identify and create job opportunities that are compatible with consumer abilities;
- foster cross-divisional collaboration to achieve successful work outcomes.

We VALUE all staff and their contributions in achieving our mission and we will:

- communicate openly and honestly;
- recruit, develop, retain and promote a diverse, qualified staff;
- involve staff in agency planning, policy development and performance objectives;
- recognize and reward exemplary job performance;
- provide staff opportunities for personal and professional growth.

We VALUE leadership at all levels and we will:

- maximize staff participation in all agency initiatives;
- create an environment which encourages and supports creativity and innovation;
- facilitate teamwork among all staff;
- provide support and leadership development opportunities.

We VALUE maximum acquisition and efficient and effective management of resources and we will:

- acquire maximum resources;
- increase legislative support;
- develop and use appropriate technological advancements;
- evaluate the effective and efficient use of our resources;
- collaborate with organizations in the public and private sectors.

We VALUE public support and we will:

- educate the public about our mission, goals, services and expertise;
- secure support from business and industry, consumers of services, partners and policymakers;
- create partnerships that expand services to enhance opportunities for consumers;
- maximize staff involvement in the development of grassroots support.

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FROM OUR COMMISSIONER AND BOARD

Dear Friends,

It is indeed a pleasure to present to you the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services' 2004 annual report, Together Success! Just as we share our commitment to the individuals and families we serve, we all can share in the celebration of their accomplishments. It is also important that we reflect on the dedication and commitment of our staff and our community partners to working together with a shared vision in support of our mission.

We have shared another challenging year. Once again, resources were limited while the demand for our specialized services continued to grow. And, once again, our staff responded to the challenge, assisting more than 62,000 Alabamians with disabilities and their families in their journey toward success and independence.

This report details the important numbers behind those achievements, but it also breathes life into those numbers in a memorable way. Through this report, you will meet a number of our consumers whose stories of success represent tens of thousands more. The true stories of their challenges and successes reflect the spirit of this department, its dedicated staff and our community partners.

We truly have much to celebrate. But be reminded, as we enjoy the successes of this past year, we must re-energize and recommit ourselves for the challenges of tomorrow. Those challenges are already upon us, but I am confident they will be met – if we continue to meet them together as we are guided by our mission – to enable Alabama's children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential.



STEVE SHIVERS
Commissioner

My dear Friends,

What a blessing it has been to serve as the chairwoman for the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services this past year! From that unique perspective, I have been privileged to witness the impact that this department has on the people it serves.

In this annual report, you will see for yourself the results of the efforts of our hard-working staff. I am so proud of their accomplishments! They will be obvious in the individual success stories found in these pages. As you read them, you'll see that, in ways both large and small, ADRS changes lives! You'll learn how the department has changed life for Jonathan and Maggie Danzer by giving them hope for a bright future for their young sons, who have hydrocephalus. You'll read about how the department's involvement has changed life for Jeneesia Walker, who sustained a brain injury in a automobile accident but is now back in school. You'll see that, thanks to ADRS, life also has changed for Jenny Suggs, who was paralyzed by a blood clot but today is back on the job. All three offer real-life examples of success at home, at school, and at work.

On behalf of the board, I would like to extend a heartfelt congratulations to our staff as well as to our community partners on another remarkable year! It is through their efforts that success is possible!



PATRICIA
'CRICKETT' FLOYD
District 3

ALABAMA BOARD OF REHABILITATION SERVICES



John Shackelford
District 1



Young Stevenson Jr.
District 2



David Brock
District 4



James Brown Jr.
District 5



Roger McCullough
District 6



Mitch Strickland
District 7



For all Alabamians with disabilities ... *a Continuum of Services*

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services provides services and assistance from birth throughout a lifetime. Last year, more than 60,000 Alabamians and their families turned to ADRS to succeed at home, at school, at work.

The ADRS *continuum of services* is provided through these major programs:

Alabama's Early Intervention System coordinates services statewide for infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays from birth to age 3, preparing them and their families for the transition to the state Department of Education's preschool program for 3- to 5-year-olds. Early Intervention also provides financial and technical support to the more than 60 community programs that provide direct services to families.

Children's Rehabilitation Service provides individualized services to children with special health-care needs from birth to age 21 and their families. In addition, Children's Rehabilitation Service provides disability services, expertise and adaptive technology to and for local school systems, assisting teachers, school nurses and other staff in the education of children with disabilities.

Children's Rehabilitation Service is also responsible for administering the statewide Hemophilia Program, which serves Alabama's children and adults who have this life-threatening blood disorder.

Vocational Rehabilitation Service is the department's largest division and provides rehabilitation, education and employment-related services to more than 44,000 adolescents and adults with disabilities each year. These services involve long-standing partnerships with local school systems, colleges and universities, junior colleges, vocational technical schools and community rehabilitation programs.

The ADRS Employer Development program provides nearly 7,500 disability management and employee placement services to Alabama businesses each year.

ADRS also administers the Business Enterprise Program for Alabama's citizens who are blind and visually impaired. The program promotes independence through the operation of more than 100 vending operations, snack bars and cafeterias in locations statewide.

SAIL (State of Alabama Independent Living)/Homebound provides services to Alabamians who have catastrophic congenital disabilities or disabilities resulting from spinal cord or head injuries. SAIL/Homebound staff provide education and support services to families with children and adults with these severe disabilities to make them more independent in the home and, whenever appropriate, to maximize their educational experience.

Though services are tailored for each person, all ADRS programs work in harmony toward a common goal: that every Alabamian with a disability have the appropriate services, support, education and training to become an independent, productive citizen.

SUCCESS AT HOME



Left, Jonathan, Maggie, Peyton, and Dawson Danzer share a moment in the playroom of their home. Below, Dawson laughs with his mother and brother.

DANZER FAMILY, MOBILE

Maggie Danzer is a walking advertisement for Alabama's Early Intervention System and Children's Rehabilitation Service.

The young mother uses every opportunity to tell others about the programs.

"I'm always pushing Early Intervention and Children's Rehab on people. I go into the whole spiel about what CRS is and what EI is."

As the mother of two sons with congenital hydrocephalus, Maggie is well-versed in the services provided by the two programs.

After Peyton's birth, doctors told Maggie and her husband, Jonathan, the youngster "would never do anything – never walk, never talk."

The couple's response?

"There's got to be something that can help."

The help came in the form of Early Intervention.

After a variety of therapies, Peyton began walking at 3.

This past fall, the youngster, now 6, started kindergarten.

The road for the Danzers' younger son, Dawson, has been rockier.

After learning four months into Maggie's pregnancy that their younger son, too, had hydrocephalus, the Danzers began preparing to care for another child with special needs. But the confusion that they experienced after the birth of their first child was gone.

"We thought, 'Well, we can do this again,' " said Maggie. "When we had Peyton, we didn't know anything. But with Dawson, knowing that (EI and

CRS) were there took a big burden off us. It let us know that everything was going to be OK."

Then, when Dawson was only 6 days old, his shunt malfunctioned and he experienced what was "the equivalent of a major stroke."

Again, the doctors prepared the couple for the worst.

"Some of them told us he would be completely deaf or completely blind, that he would never walk, never stand, never crawl," Maggie says.

And again, Early Intervention and CRS stepped in.

Today, thanks to occupational therapy, physical therapy, orthopedic clinic, vision clinic, and hearing clinic, Dawson is proving the doctor's predictions wrong.

Though not yet walking, he's able to get around his home by rolling from place to place, just as his brother did at his age.

He – like his brother – is a happy, growing boy. And his parents are optimistic about his and his brother's future.

"I haven't exactly looked that far in advance, but knowing in the back of my mind that Vocational Rehabilitation Service will be there when it's time for the boys to get into the workplace is an amazing thing," says Maggie.

As is proving the case today, Maggie is thinking her sons will once again prove the doctors wrong.

"That's what keeps us going."

– EI staff member Jo Vaughn contributed to this report.

Dawson Danzer's CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

EARLY INTERVENTION

Early Intervention was involved with Peyton and Dawson when they were infants, coordinating the array of therapies necessary to prepare the boys for school.

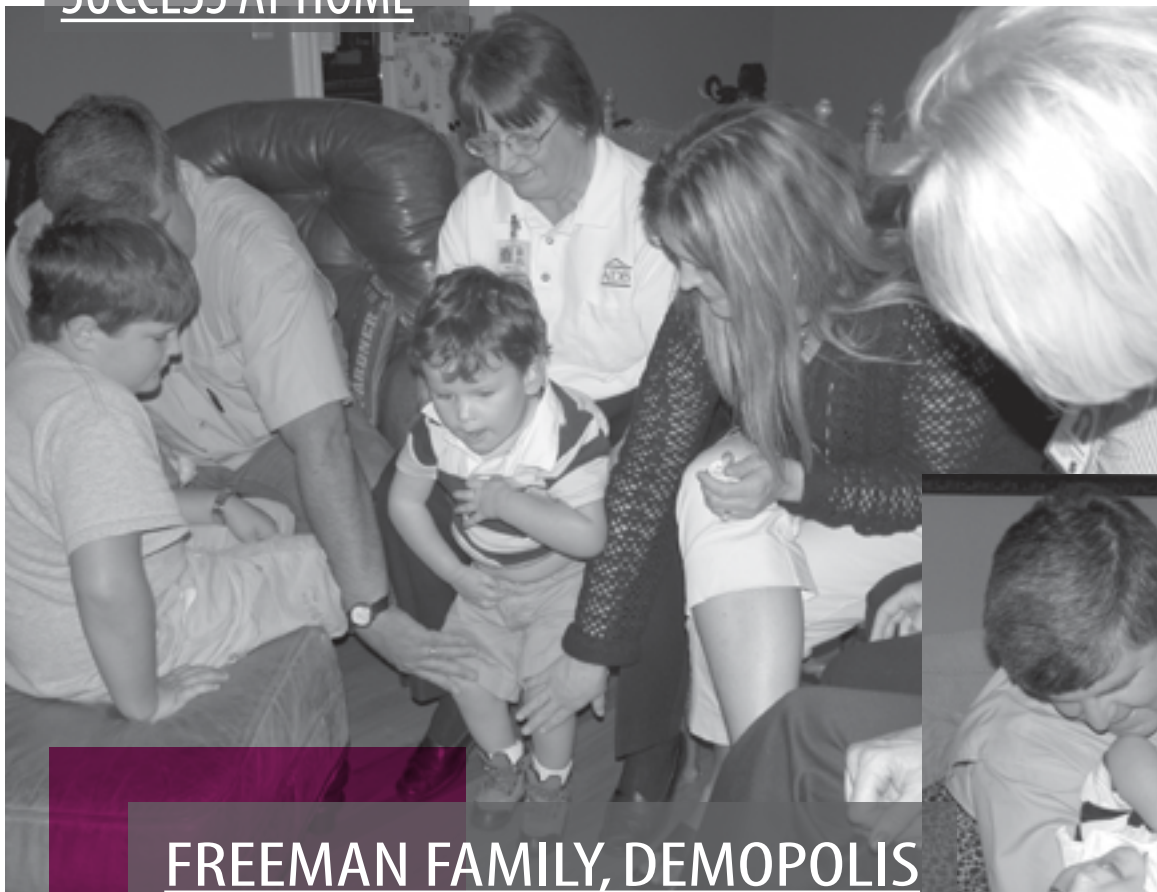
CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION

Peyton and Dawson have been receiving services from CRS since shortly after their births. The two attend a variety of clinics and CRS has provided medical equipment. In addition, CRS will work with the boys' schools to assure they succeed in the classroom.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

As the Danzer boys enter adolescence, VRS will work with them and their family to develop plans for further education and employment.

SUCCESS AT HOME



Left, Will Freeman gets to his feet as his brother, father, mother and AIDB staff member Debbie Sanchez look on. Below, Will plays with his dad, Kenny.

FREEMAN FAMILY, DEMOPOLIS



For Kenny and Teresa Freeman, little things mean a lot – especially when it comes to their youngest child, Will.

“Every day there are little things that he does that are huge for us, that make us squeal with delight,” says Teresa of her 3-year-old son, who has vision problems and mitochondrial encephalomyopathy, a genetic disease that causes muscle weakness and wasting accompanied by neurological difficulties.

Will’s entry into the world was typical.

Teresa Freeman’s pregnancy was normal, and there were no problems or complications with the delivery.

A few weeks after Will’s birth, however, his father expressed some concern about his eyesight.

After a series of doctor visits, the boy was diagnosed with an underdeveloped optic nerve.

The family was referred to Alabama’s Early Intervention System and met Debbie Sanchez, a service coordinator with the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind.

Debbie immediately noticed that the youngster had several developmental delays, but at first attributed them to his visual impairment.

As time passed, however, she noticed symptoms that seemed to indicate something else might account for some of Will’s problems.

She began to gently urge the family to seek answers.

Her prodding led the Freemans on a months-long journey that took them to doctors in Birmingham and Atlanta and ended with Will’s diagnosis of mitochondrial disease.

In the year since their son’s diagnosis, the Freemans have seen firsthand one of the greatest strengths of Alabama’s Early Intervention System: collaboration.

“The collaboration has worked well,” says Kenny Freeman. “It has been unbelievable.”

Debbie agrees.

“My background is in education and vision,” she says. “I don’t have all the answers. I can tell you about his developmental needs, but it takes a collaboration of many, many people to service a child.”

Will’s care “team” has included nurses, social workers, physical therapists and nutritionists from a variety of programs, including Children’s Rehabilitation and AIDB.

And all of them have been amazing, Teresa says.

“CRS, doctors, AIDB – everyone who has touched our baby has been so wonderful,” she says. “God has placed the right people in our lives.”

— EI staff member Tania Baldwin contributed to this story.

Will Freeman’s *CONTINUUM OF SERVICES*

EARLY INTERVENTION

Early Intervention began working with Will when he was only a few months old, coordinating services including occupational, physical and speech therapies.

CHILDREN’S REHABILITATION

CRS has provided specialized therapies and care coordination as well as assisting the Freeman family with the purchase of a wheelchair. When Will enters the classroom, CRS staff members will collaborate with his schools to enable him to receive the best education possible.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

When Will enters adolescence, VRS will be available to assist the Freeman family as necessary in preparing him for independence as an adult by developing plans for further education and employment.



Left, Tykeria and Helen Keller School teacher Laura Riley work together on an assignment. Below, Ty walks between classes with her grandmother, Eleanor "Tink" Smoot, and Patricia Patterson, CRS social worker.



TYKERIA SMOOT, TALLADEGA

Nine-year-old Tykeria Smoot has perfected her "beauty contest wave." She's gotten so good at it, in fact, that she's won three of the four beauty pageants she's competed in at the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind's Helen Keller School.

The youngster's success in the competitions has been no surprise to her grandmother, Eleanor "Tink" Smoot.

"She loves mirrors," Tink says. "I've had to put several up around her bedroom."

And, like other beauty queens, Tykeria also is fond of clothes.

"She gets in the store and she goes," her grandmother says. "She especially loves shoes. Don't let her get anywhere with shoes."

But Tykeria's popularity extends well beyond the walls of Helen Keller. The young girl, who has cerebral palsy and is deaf, is a frequent visitor to the CRS offices in Talladega and Anniston, where she is a favorite among staff.

Tykeria and her grandmother first became part of what Tink calls her "CRS family" when little Tykeria was a toddler.

That's when she brought her granddaughter to CRS and met Social Worker Patricia Patterson, who works in the CRS office in Talladega.

"I didn't know how to go about doing anything until I heard about CRS," says Tink. "Ever since then, everything's been smooth sailing. It was a rough road before then because I didn't understand everything the doctor would say about something, but now I can call Patricia and she breaks it down for me."

Tykeria attends orthopedic clinic at the CRS office in Anniston. Through the years, CRS has assisted with hip, eye, ear and feeding tube surgeries. Patricia also helps Tink to schedule and coordinate medical and dental appointments.

Just as important, though, is Patricia's personal connection to the Smoots.

Tink says that whenever she feels discouraged, she picks up the telephone and calls Patricia and instantly feels better.

"I felt like I was alone until I met Patricia," she says. "She pulled me out of the woods."

And she thinks just as highly of CRS.

"I've got a family with CRS because they do stick by me. If they can't do something, they'll find somebody who can do it."

— CRS staff member Patricia Patterson contributed to this report.

Tykeria Smoot's CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

EARLY INTERVENTION

Tykeria was eligible for Early Intervention as soon as she was diagnosed with cerebral palsy. In FY 2004, EI assisted more than 4,300 infants and toddlers and their families.

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION

Tykeria has been receiving services from Children's Rehabilitation since she was a toddler. CRS provides care coordination and has assisted with hip, ear, eye and feeding tube surgeries.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

When Tykeria becomes a teenager, VRS will be available to work with her in preparing for independence as an adult by developing a plan for further education and employment.



Left, NiCole and mother Terry visit with ADRS staffers Bynum Duren, Beth Creech, Michael Quinn, Carol Pinkard, Sharol Hammer and Cynthia Murphy. The six are part of the ADRS team that has worked with NiCole since her accident. Below, NiCole hugs one of the horses at Tannehill Stables, where she works.

NICOLE REAGAN, HUEYTOWN



It's only about 90 miles from Fayette to Birmingham. But for the parents of NiCole Reagan, it seems much, much farther. The Reagan family's journey began on a steamy summer day in July 2001. NiCole, then 16, was competing in a rodeo when her horse took a spill. The young woman sustained a severe traumatic brain injury (TBI) and was airlifted to Birmingham.

NiCole's trip to Children's Hospital by helicopter took 20 minutes, while her parents' journey by car lasted what seemed like a lifetime. Her mother, Terry, remembers it as the "longest hour and 15 minutes of my life."

The Reagans later learned that their oldest child had died twice enroute to the hospital.

She didn't awaken for nine agonizing days.

Her family, meanwhile, was at a loss about what to do for a child with a traumatic brain injury. The doctors cautioned the family not to be overly optimistic.

Then help came.

Two weeks before NiCole was discharged, Cynthia Murphy, who works with the TBI program at the CRS office in Homewood, visited the family.

"She was a godsend," Terry says.

Cynthia offered the family insight into NiCole's injury, telling them what to expect, what would be involved in her long recovery, what would be involved in getting her back into school.

She also coordinated the variety of services that NiCole would require.

"She helped with simple things," Terry recalls, "like doctor's appointments and getting us involved in different programs that helped her through therapy, transitioning her back into school. Just everything. She would cover and arrange things that were difficult for me to do at the time."

Upon her release, NiCole wasn't oriented to "person, place, or time,"

Cynthia says. She couldn't hold her head up, walk, or provide any sort of self-care.

After months of intensive therapy, she finally was able to walk again in the spring of 2003.

Getting her back into school was a different sort of challenge.

Prior to her injury, she had passed the Alabama High School Graduation Exit Exam. She had been at the top of her class and her long-term goal was to become a veterinarian.

The TBI required a shift from college prep coursework to "more functional" courses, Cynthia says.

Fortunately, the young woman's individualized education program (IEP) team – consisting of teachers, her guidance counselor, Vocational Rehabilitation staff members, and Murphy – has been "good at developing courses that give her more vocational skills for use beyond high school," Cynthia says.

NiCole's participation in the Homewood CRS Teen Transition Clinic – which brings together CRS, VRS, and Independent Living staff members – also helped, she says.

"It helped define more specific educational and vocational goals and gave us (the IEP team) some direction," Cynthia says.

These days, NiCole, now 20, is working at Tannehill Stables in McCalla, earning work credit hours.

She's looking to the future, to the journey into adulthood and the workplace.

And – unlike the trip from Fayette to Birmingham – her family, CRS and VRS will be along for the ride.

– CRS staff member Cynthia Murphy contributed to this report.

NiCole Reagan's CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

EARLY INTERVENTION

Early Intervention services are available to eligible children from birth to age 3. NiCole was injured when she was 16 years old.

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION

NiCole has been receiving services from CRS since shortly after her accident. In addition to providing care coordination, CRS has worked closely with NiCole's schools to assure that she has all she needs to succeed in the classroom.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

VRS staff members are assisting NiCole in determining a career path. Whether she decides to continue her education or enter the workplace, VRS will be available to assist her in preparing for living independently.

SUCCESS AT SCHOOL



Left, Daniel uses an alphabet board to communicate with "Miss Jo." Below, Daniel also uses a Dynawrite to communicate. The keyboard-based augmentative communication device allows Daniel to "type and talk."

DANIEL ORSAG, GRAND BAY

Daniel Orsag has surprised a lot of people with his comeback – including the staff at Alma Bryant High School in Bayou La Batre.

"Because he can't speak, you have the impression there will be a lot he won't be able to do," says teacher Marilyn Harbison. "But he showed us quickly that he wants to learn."

When Daniel was 14, a bullet penetrated his brain, silenced his voice and paralyzed much of his body. Daniel couldn't move, breathe on his own or communicate.

Children's Rehabilitation Service embraced him and helped with the first important step back – getting Daniel the intensive care he needed. Countless sessions of therapy and numerous surgeries continued long after he went home. Through it all, Daniel showed the amazing will to recover.

"Daniel has a joyful tenacity you can't ignore," says TBI coordinator Jo Blount. "He has never given up."

That tenacity, along with a supportive family, has powered a remarkable turnaround.

Daniel has been unable to speak since the shooting, although he lets you know he's happy by pumping his right fist into the air and belting out a joyous whoop. CRS has given him a new voice with a device called a "Dynawrite." The electronic unit enables him to join in conversations, ask questions in school, and even flirt with the girls. When he's in a hurry, he uses a simpler alphabet board to save time. Either way, Daniel is making himself heard again.

CRS also got Daniel moving again – in wheelchairs. He has a manual version, but the motorized model he uses to zip around school is his favorite.

Three years after his injury, Daniel has realized his goal of going back to school. Born into a family of shrimpers, he has a dream.

"I want to be the first person in my family to graduate," he types on his Dynawrite. "I love Miss Jo ... she helped me get back into school."

She also has helped Daniel's teachers.

"I'm a trained special ed teacher and have had exposure to traumatic brain injury," says homeroom teacher Tamara Butters, "but Jo is up to date on everything regarding TBI and specifically about Daniel. She is like another parent for him. I don't know what I would've done without her."

Next year, Daniel will be in his first regular class – computer science, a field his counselors say could be his future.

But Daniel has a more immediate goal.

"I want to walk again," he spells out to 'Miss Jo' on his alphabet board, sitting in his wheelchair in Mrs. Butters' classroom.

No one is saying he won't. In fact, CRS has already given him a cane for when that day comes.

And as "Miss Jo" smiles, Daniel throws his head back and lets out his trademark whoop.

– CRS staff member Jo Blount contributed to this report.

Daniel Orsag's CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

EARLY INTERVENTION

Early Intervention services are available to eligible children from birth to age 3. Daniel was injured when he was 14.

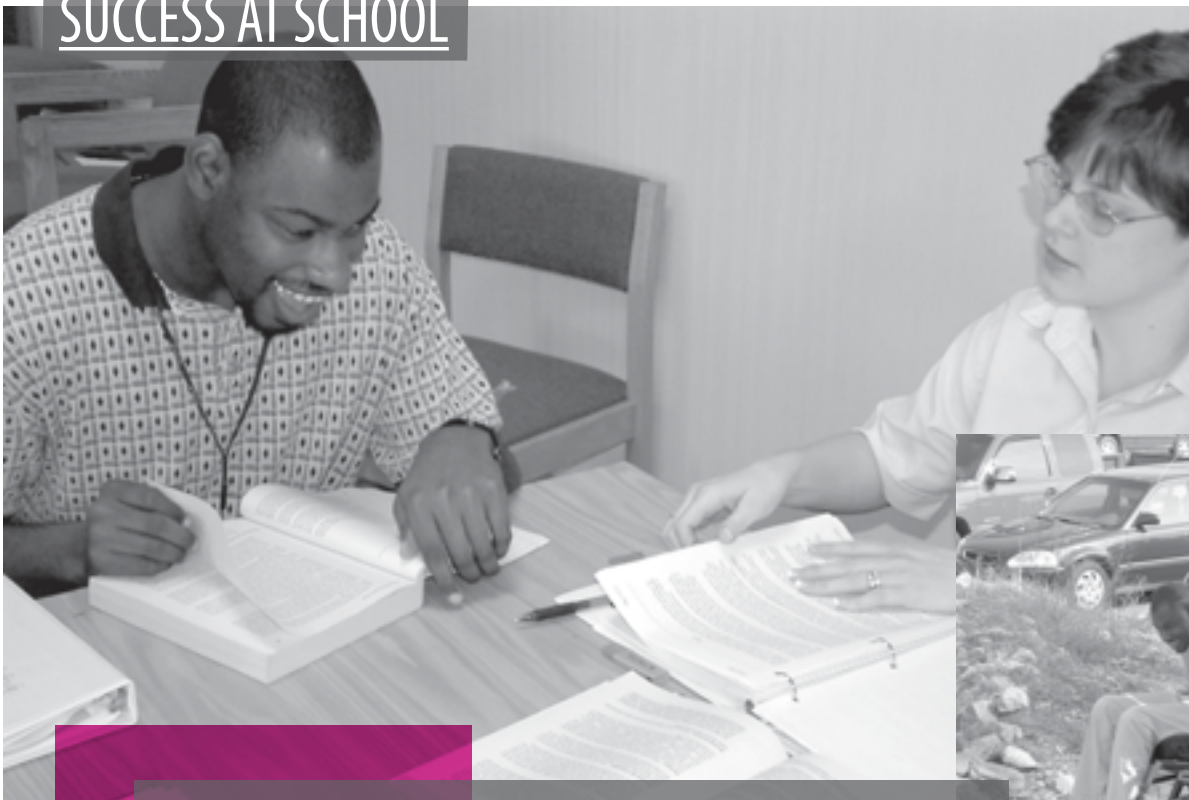
CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION

Daniel has been a CRS consumer since his injury. In that time, CRS has provided care coordination services, equipment, and therapies, assisted with surgeries, and helped the young man return to school after a three-year absence.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

As Daniel approaches graduation, VRS staff will work with him to develop a plan for his future. Whether he decides to enter the workforce or continue his education, VRS will provide assistance, from technology to special accommodations.

SUCCESS AT SCHOOL



Left, George studies with a classmate at Auburn University Montgomery, where he is pursuing a master's in counseling. Below, the 24-year-old shows VRS Rehabilitation Counselor Mary Ann Livingston around the AUM campus.

GEORGE PORTER, MONTGOMERY



As a child growing up in the small east Alabama town of Lafayette, George Porter dreamed of going to college.

But the young man, who has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair, wasn't sure how to make it happen.

Then, one day toward the end of his senior year, he was called to the guidance counselor's office.

"I thought I was in trouble or that something was wrong," the 24-year-old recalls. "But when I got there, they told me about Vocational Rehabilitation. It couldn't have happened at a better time. It was just a miracle."

That day, he says, was a turning point for him. Knowing, suddenly, that his childhood dream was possible.

"I guess, in a subconscious way, VR gave me confidence," he says. "It showed me that, 'Wow, this is actually possible.' VR gave me the confidence to say, 'My goal is realistic. It can be accomplished.' It gave me hope."

Following a vocational assessment at ADRS/Lakeshore, George enrolled at Auburn University Montgomery.

That first night on campus was difficult, he says.

"I sat in my dorm room and said, 'OK, we're either going to do this or we're going to have to go back home.'"

Except for an occasional visit, he hasn't been home since.

Through the years, Vocational Rehabilitation has assisted with tuition, books, supplies, and housing. This past summer, VRS replaced his wheelchair, which was worn from frequent trips around campus.

VRS also has worked "hand in hand" with AUM's Center for Special Services to assure that George has any necessary accommodations.

Other involvement has been less tangible.

"I see my counselor (Mary Ann Livingston) as someone I can talk to," he says.

Today, the young man is in graduate school at AUM, pursuing a master's degree in counseling and human development after receiving his bachelor's degree in information systems in May 2004.

His exposure to VR services is at least partially responsible for his new career interest, he says.

"I had sense of how much they care about the clients they work with," he says. "Once I saw how much they care about their clients, I thought, 'I can see why they do that. I know why they feel the way they do and work as hard as they do.' And I can see myself doing some of the same things. I can see myself caring about people and about a person's well-being as much as they do."

— VRS staff member Mary Ann Livingston contributed to this report.

George Porter's *CONTINUUM OF SERVICES*

EARLY INTERVENTION

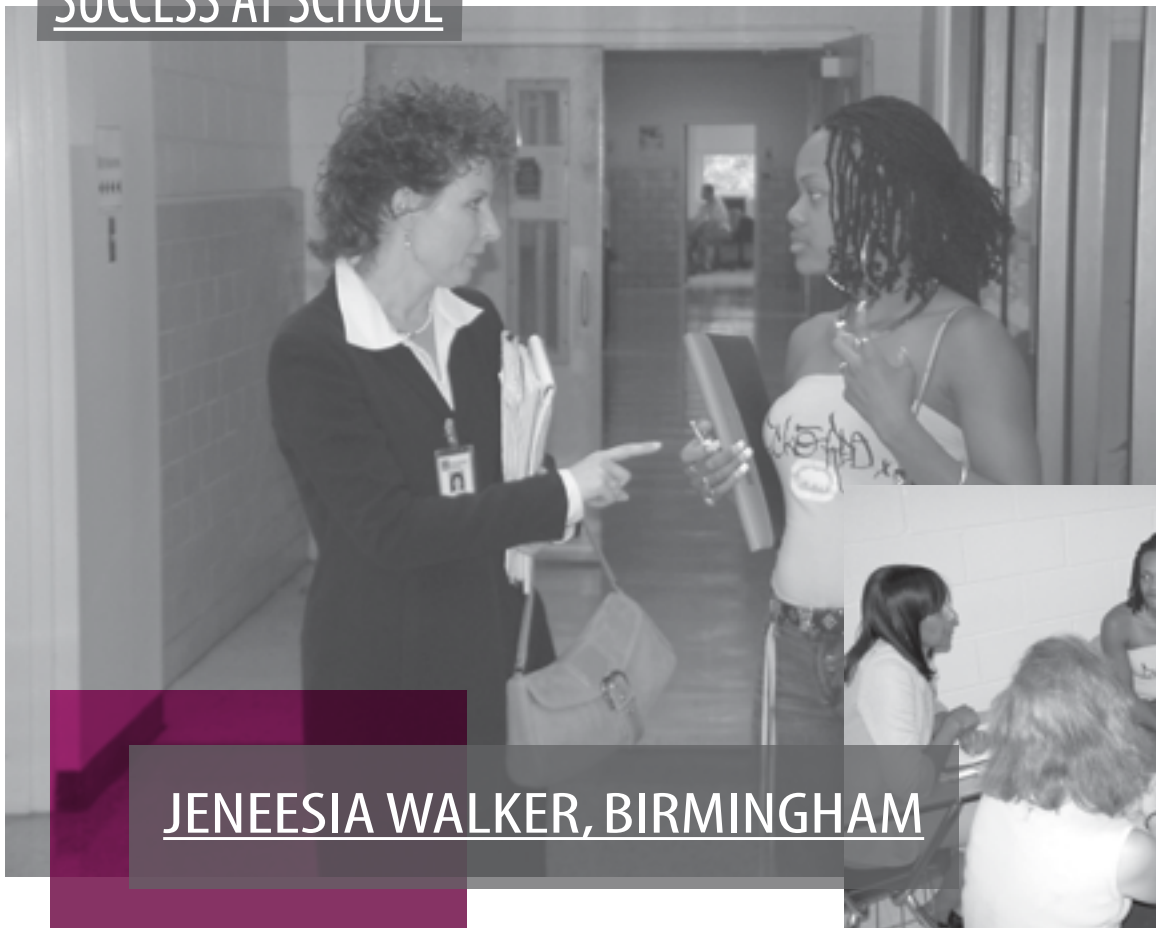
George was eligible for Early Intervention services as soon as she was diagnosed with cerebral palsy. In FY 2004, EI assisted more than 4,300 infants and toddlers and their families.

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION

CRS began serving George when he was 10 months old. The youngster attended eye and cerebral palsy clinics and received physical therapy at home and school. In addition, a CRS physical therapist worked with school system staff to instruct them about proper accommodations and modifications. CRS also provided wheelchairs, braces and walkers.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

George became a VRS consumer before he graduated from high school. VRS has provided vocational assessments and tuition assistance, as well as two wheelchairs. Also, VRS has collaborated with his university to ensure that he has appropriate accommodations.



Left, Jeneesia talks with CRS Social Worker Cynthia Murphy. Below, Jeneesia discusses her progress with VRS Rehabilitation Counselor Phoebe Givens, Murphy and ADRS/Lakeshore Vocational Evaluator Darcy Mitchell.

JENEESIA WALKER, BIRMINGHAM

Thanksgiving conjures up painful memories for Jeneesia Walker. It was the day after Thanksgiving 2000 that she was in a car that was struck head-on by a drunken driver. The impact crushed her side of the car. She sustained massive damage to the right side of her body, but the most-devastating injury was to the frontal lobe of her brain. Jeneesia, now 19, remembers being confused when she awoke one week later: "When I woke up, I was like, 'Is this me? Are you my real mom? Where am I? What is wrong with me? Is this my real arm? Is this my real leg? Is this my real body?' I had so many questions." Because of the extent of her injuries, she remained in the hospital until a couple of weeks before Christmas. "I remember being in the hospital and all of the nurses kept asking me what I wanted for Christmas," she said. "All I wanted for Christmas was to go home." Her homecoming wasn't an easy one. "It was hard for everybody" in the family, she said. She required months of extensive therapy on her right arm and leg, which were severely damaged in the crash. Cynthia Murphy, who works with the traumatic brain injury (TBI) program at the CRS office in Homewood and had entered the picture two weeks before Jeneesia was released from the hospital, was there to schedule appointments and educate Jeneesia and her family about her brain injury,

which created several problems. For example, the teenager, an avid reader prior to the accident, was suddenly "lost in words." She had to re-learn how to speak correctly, and still struggles with language difficulties today. When she was finally able to return to school, the TBI also caused a variety of behavioral problems that had to be explained to her teachers. Once again, Cynthia stepped in. "We had a lot of meetings with the school about her injury and how it impacts behavior," she said. "It was a matter of providing information, attending every meeting, and saying, 'Call me if you have a question.' " Amazingly, the young woman was able to graduate with her class, even receiving a dance scholarship to Lawson State Community College in Birmingham. Now in her second year at Lawson State, she's working with VRS Rehabilitation Counselor Phoebe Givens to plot a career course. VRS is also working with Lawson State to assure that she gets appropriate accommodations. And Cynthia Murphy remains involved – which is a good thing as far as Jeneesia is concerned. "God knows what I would do without her," she said. "And I don't know what my parents would've done. I'm really glad God blessed me by sending her into my life."

– CRS staff member Cynthia Murphy contributed to this report.

Jeneesia Walker's CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

EARLY INTERVENTION

Early Intervention services are available to eligible children from birth to age 3. Jeneesia sustained her brain injury at 15 years old.

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION

CRS began providing care-coordination services to Jeneesia within a few weeks of her brain injury. CRS also helped her family to locate resources for Jeneesia. When the teenager was healthy enough to return to the classroom, CRS worked with her school to assure she received necessary accommodations.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

VRS is helping Jeneesia to fulfill her dream of a college education and career. VRS has provided a vocational assessment and tuition assistance and has collaborated with her college to assure she gets any necessary accommodations.



Left, Keith is a sophomore at Spring Garden High School in Cherokee County. Below, Keith and his classmates look over some specimens in science class.



KEITH KERR, PIEDMONT

Keith Kerr is determined.

He's been that way "from day one," Cindy Smart says of her 16-year-old son, who has cerebral palsy and hydrocephalus.

"He doesn't want any help unless it's absolutely necessary. He wants the hard way – always has."

Take, for example, the entrance to the teenager's home in Piedmont.

Does he take the ramp or the stairs to get into the house?

"I go up the steps," he says.

And consider his response to the doctor who told him to get a wheelchair because he wasn't going to be able to continue walking: He walked out.

"You can't look at a person and decide if he's going to walk," Keith says. "You just can't do that. Nobody knows the future."

He's still walking four years later, by the way.

But the young man hasn't succeeded merely through sheer force of will.

Children's Rehabilitation also has played a significant role in Keith's successes through the years.

"It's helped guide us," Cindy says. "It's helped us to know what all is out there."

She particularly likes the convenience of CRS – especially since Keith has attended a variety of CRS clinics since he was a youngster.

"It's good to have it all there together," she says. "We could go to CRS

and get braces, a lift, crutches, a wheelchair, and see the doctor all in one place. They have us in every direction."

Judy Martel, a social worker in the CRS office in Anniston, has been working with Keith since he was a toddler and has become like a member of the family, Cindy says.

Keith thinks of her as a "second mama."

"She helps me with everything," he says. "Anything I need, all I have to do is go to her and she'll do whatever she can to get it."

Keith also has a strong support network at Spring Garden High School, where he is "just like any other 16 year old."

When he had to miss school last year because of a head injury, administrators were understanding, telling his family that "his health comes first."

That support has helped him to keep pace with his peers. Despite his absences, he's an A-B student.

Sometimes, though, a well-meaning teacher will make the mistake of asking him to use a wheelchair.

He politely declines.

"I'd rather walk."

— CRS staff member Judy Martel contributed to this report.

Keith Kerr's CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

EARLY INTERVENTION

Keith was eligible for Early Intervention services as soon as he was diagnosed with cerebral palsy.

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION

Keith became a CRS consumer as a toddler. Through the years, CRS has provided equipment such as braces, a lift, and a wheelchair. Keith also has attended a variety of CRS clinics.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

As Keith approaches graduation, VRS will work with him to formulate a plan for his independence as an adult. Whether he decides to further his education or go directly into the workplace, VRS will be there to provide any assistance he might need.

SUCCESS AT WORK



Left, Mark, far right, manages the "Sugar Shack," a 24/7 cafeteria at International Paper's Riverdale Plant near Selma. The cafeteria serves more than 1,000 IP employees and contractors. Below, Mark talks with one of his employees.

MARK HIEFTJE, SELMA



It's a long way from Vietnam to Selma, Alabama. But for Mark Hieftje, it has been a trip of destiny. At age 55, Mark has launched a new career as a businessman, operating "The Sugar Shack," a full-service, 24-hour cafeteria serving more than 1,000 employees of International Paper Company's Riverdale Plant. For a career executive in the federal government, the transition has been an adjustment. But not as big as the adjustment he was forced to make as an 18-year-old soldier in Vietnam.

In 1968, while on patrol, a fragmentation grenade detonated just feet from his head, blinding him instantly. Awarded the Bronze Star, Mark returned to civilian life looking for a new direction.

He earned a teaching certificate in college. But the lessons he learned as a blind person gave him insight.

"People treated me like a child," Mark says, "not like an adult and a veteran. But I noticed that a lot of the blind had not done anything to help themselves. They went through rehab, went home and stayed there. I kept doing things."

Mark re-entered government service and eventually joined the Veterans Administration, where he became a director of Blind Programs. In that role, Mark restructured the blind rehabilitation program in the state of Connecticut and developed the first program for blind veterans in Puerto

Rico. Mark retired after 23 years of service and moved to Alabama to be closer to family.

"I retired 'prematurely,'" Mark says. "I still had a lot of energy and wanted to stay involved mentally and financially. Because of my career in the 'blindness business,' I was very familiar with Alabama's Business Enterprise Program."

Alabama's BEP is one of the nation's most successful programs for employing the blind through the operation of vending machines, snack bars, cafeterias and military dining halls. Mark was accepted into the program and assigned to manage the Sugar Shack cafeteria in Selma.

"Mark is an astute businessman who understands the importance of customer satisfaction," says BEP Assistant Director Perry Hopper. "This is one of our more complex sites and Mark is well qualified to handle its challenges."

Now in his third year at the Sugar Shack, Mark says life is sweet. He savors the independence the business has brought him and is much closer to his family. In fact, they often help with cafeteria duties. Once an administrator of programs for the blind, Mark is now a consumer of those services.

"I enjoy my life," Mark says, "and BEP has made it possible."

— BEP staff member Perry Hopper contributed to this report.

Mark Hieftje's CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

EARLY INTERVENTION

Early Intervention services are available to eligible children from birth to age 3. Mark lost his eyesight as an adult.

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION

CRS serves children with special needs from birth to age 21. Mark wasn't an Alabama resident at the time of his injury at 18.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Mark became a VRS consumer after he relocated to Alabama. Through Alabama's BEP, Mark has received the training and support vital to his success as an independent businessman.

SUCCESS AT WORK



Left, Shannon reviews a customer call. The young man works at STI, a company that produces software for school systems throughout Alabama. Below, Shannon discusses a technical question with Department Manager Curt Smith.



SHANNON RANKINS, MOBILE

"I wish I were dead. I'm tired of all this."

Shannon Rankins remembers the despair he felt as an 8-year-old boy. He also remembers that it was a turning point in his life.

Shannon was recovering from an accident at school that broke his neck and several other bones. A classmate pushed his wheelchair a little too hard, and he tumbled to the floor. Another child might have only been bruised, but Shannon was born with brittle bone disease. Broken bones were a routine part of his childhood.

"When I was 1 year old," Shannon says, "my baby sitter broke my arm when she handed me to my mother."

That's when he was diagnosed with osteogenesis imperfecta and started going to Children's Rehabilitation Service.

CRS gave Shannon his first wheelchair when he was 5, but he says he didn't use it much until he started school.

"The chair was big and I was little," he says.

Shannon guesses he had more than 50 broken bones by the time he was 8. He didn't understand why – he only knew he was tired of the pain. So when his neck was broken, he gave up. Then he saw his father's reaction to his anguish.

"I saw my father crying," says Shannon. "He held me and told me I shouldn't say those things because God had a reason."

Those words from his father, who has the same condition, changed Shannon's way of thinking. Today, at 26, he lives by that same philosophy.

"It's by God's grace that I'm where I am today."

Where is he? Busy. With support from Vocational Rehabilitation, Shannon

earned a degree from the University of South Alabama. Now employed by STI of Mobile, which supplies educational software to Alabama school systems, Shannon provides technical support and training to users.

Shannon described himself as "different" when he applied for the job, and his supervisor agrees.

"He doesn't give up easily," says Curt Smith. "He's tenacious – like a dog with a sock."

Shannon lives with his father and teenage sister, who has osteogenesis imperfecta, too. Shannon has become the family breadwinner and head cheerleader for his sister, urging her to get her diploma and go to college.

Shannon enjoys leading Bible studies and worship services for USA's Baptist Student Ministries, and speaking to numerous groups, including other people with disabilities.

"I want to help anybody God puts in front of me," he says. "I talk to people who might be afraid to tackle the world because of their disability. I think I can be an example to them."

Shannon is grateful for all the assistance from ADRS over the years, especially the independence that came with equipping his car so he could drive.

But he says his father taught him life's biggest lesson, one he learned as a despairing 8-year old.

"He told me life goes on. I can have a job and be married. I can do all types of things," Shannon says. "He was right."

– VRS staff member Beth Hanks contributed to this report.

Shannon Rankins' CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

EARLY INTERVENTION

Early Intervention services are available to eligible children from birth to age 3.

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION

Shannon became a member of the CRS family at age 4. Through the years, CRS provided clinic services, physical therapy, nutrition counseling, multiple surgeries, a wheelchair, and equipment repairs and modifications. CRS staff also frequently consulted with Shannon's schools.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

VRS first became a part of Shannon's life when he was in high school. In addition to helping the young man develop a career plan, VRS staff assisted with college tuition, vehicle modifications, driver training and assistive technology.

SUCCESS AT WORK



Left, Jenny answers a student's question during her fourth-block class. Below, Bynum Duren, VRS rehabilitation technology specialist, and Renee Hathcox, independent living specialist, show Jenny the plans for her new, specially designed work station.



JENNY SUGGS, ASHLAND

A lot of people dread going to work. Not Jenny Suggs.

When a spinal cord injury took her away from her job as a special education teacher at Oxford High School, she couldn't wait to return.

"I thought about going back from the beginning," she says. "I wanted to get back to get things as close to normal as possible."

For Jenny, life stopped being "normal" on the first day of spring break in 2002.

She awoke early that morning and felt fine. Later, however, she felt a sharp pain tear through her chest. Within moments, she realized something was horribly wrong and asked her husband to take her to the emergency room.

By the time she got to the car, both hands were numb. On the way to the ER, she began to have difficulty breathing.

She was flown to a Birmingham hospital, where exploratory surgery revealed a blood clot that had pressed against the uppermost section of the spinal cord, causing massive bruising.

She spent the next few weeks in the hospital – two of them on a respirator.

She then was taken to a rehab hospital in Atlanta, where she spent a year in various therapies and exercise programs.

After she was released, she toyed with the idea of returning to work, but was too weak and easily fatigued.

"We wanted to make sure that when I came back I'd be able to stay," she says.

She began working toward a fall 2004 return.

Even as her strength and stamina improved, she knew she'd need help to get back to the classroom.

The State of Alabama's Independent Living (SAIL) Service was there to help. Through the program's Personal Assistance Service (PAS), Jenny was able to get an assistant to help her on the job.

"Without her (the assistant) here, I couldn't be here," Jenny says. "I need help with driving and, obviously, reaching things. I also need help in the lunchroom and the bathroom. Those are things I couldn't do myself, even if I wanted to."

SAIL also has provided her with assistive devices – such as a stander for her hairdryer and a special "rocker" knife for use in the kitchen – to help her to be more independent at home.

VRS also has pitched in, assisting with accommodations for her classroom, including a work station specially designed by a VRS rehabilitation technology specialist.

Today, life "seems a little more normal," she says.

And now that she's back at work, what's her next goal?

To be able to spend a few hours alone in her house – something she hasn't done since her injury.

"It would be good to spend some time by myself."

– SAIL staff member Charlene Cleveland contributed to this report.

Jenny Suggs' CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

EARLY INTERVENTION

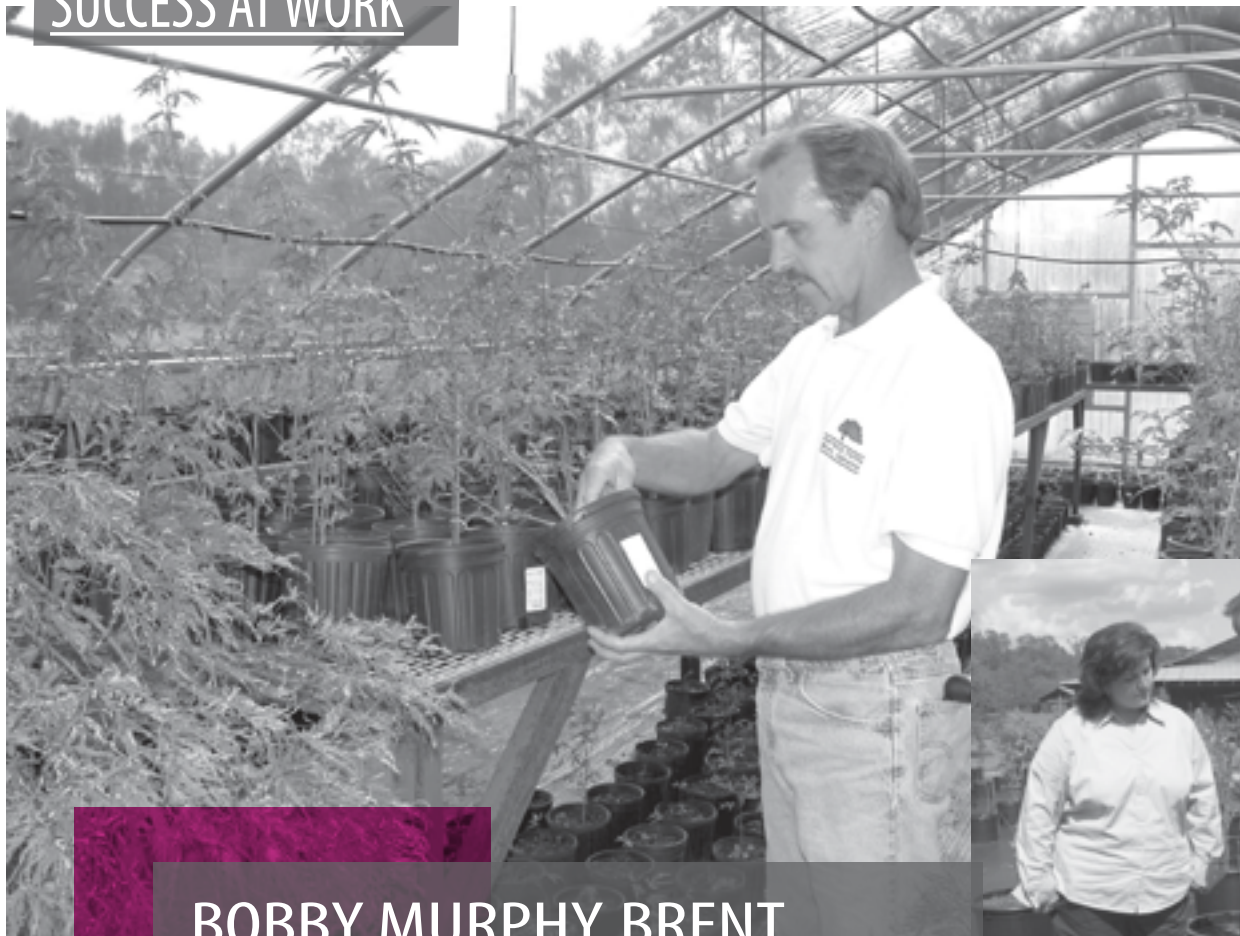
Early Intervention services are available to eligible children from birth to age 3. Jenny contacted the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services following her injury as an adult.

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION

CRS serves children with special needs from birth to age 21. Jenny was injured as an adult.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Since her injury, VRS has worked with Jenny to assure she has appropriate accommodations at work. SAIL also has played a vital role in her return to independence by providing a personal assistant for work and assistive devices for her home.



Left, Bobby Murphy works in his greenhouse, which contains more than 3,000 Japanese maple trees. "Without VR, I'd still be saving for a greenhouse," Bobby says. Below, Bobby shows a tree to his VRS rehabilitation counselor, Leslie Dawson.



BOBBY MURPHY, BRENT

Bobby Murphy doesn't give in easily. A broken back and paralysis in one leg sent him to the operating room for surgery, but within a year he was back on the job at the BF Goodrich plant in Tuscaloosa. He worked long enough to retire, but severe pain led to more surgery. The effects of his injury were permanent and an eight-hour job was now out of the question. For an avid outdoorsman who loved physical work, it was not welcome news.

"I was so unhappy I would crawl out of my house just to spend 20 minutes on my lawn mower," he says, "because it made me feel useful and worthy."

Seeing no employment options, Bobby reluctantly applied for Social Security.

His case was referred to Vocational Rehabilitation Service. At first, his pride wouldn't allow him to return calls from VRS counselor Leslie Dawson.

"It was embarrassing. I've never taken a handout for anything," Bobby says. "If I couldn't figure it out on my own, I wasn't going to do it."

But Leslie was persistent and finally convinced Bobby to talk with her.

"I told him you can have a disability and still have a life and a job – though maybe it's not the traditional 8-to-5 job," Leslie says. "So we talked about self-employment."

Even while on the assembly line, Bobby had always dreamed of raising Japanese maple trees. His health problems had discouraged him from pursuing that, even as a sideline, even though his 22-acre homesite in Bibb County was the perfect setting.

Leslie saw that dream as Bobby's future. She helped him develop a business plan and enrolled him in small business training. And while Bobby invested in an irrigation system, Leslie arranged for a greenhouse that he says would have taken him years to acquire. The rest was up to Bobby's work ethic and determination.

Today, there are 3,000 trees in Bobby's greenhouse and hundreds of others growing in neat rows near his house. His homesite now has a name – Harrisburg Farms – and he supplies trees to retailers throughout Alabama.

Leslie stops in occasionally, but Bobby seems to have a firm grip on his future, planning to devote more acres to his seedlings.

"I feel better about myself because I can work now and earn an income," he says.

He is proud of his accomplishments, but is quick to credit ADRS.

"Without VR," says Bobby, "I'd still be saving for a greenhouse and dreaming of all this."

– VRS staff member Leslie Dawson contributed to this report

Bobby Murphy's *CONTINUUM OF SERVICES*

EARLY INTERVENTION

Early Intervention services are available to eligible children from birth to age 3. Bobby contacted the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation following his injury as an adult.

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION

CRS serves children with disabilities from birth to age 21. Bobby became an ADRS consumer as an adult.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

After talking with Bobby about self-employment, his VRS counselor helped him prepare a business plan, got him into small business training and assisted with the purchase of a greenhouse for his tree farm.

ALABAMA'S EARLY INTERVENTION SYSTEM

serving children from birth to age 3

Alabama's Early Intervention System (AEIS) coordinates a statewide system of services and supports for infants and toddlers with a delay in a major area of development or a condition that has a high probability of resulting in delay. With the assistance of eight other state agencies working through the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC), community service providers and the families of children served by AEIS, the system provides a coordinated, community-based, family-centered system of services. The early intervention system was created as an important first step to ensuring that all children start school ready to learn.

AEIS staff members begin early to encourage families who have young children with delays to become involved in community activities that already exist for young children, if possible. Providing early intervention for infants and toddlers in their "natural" environments is a very important part of their learning process.

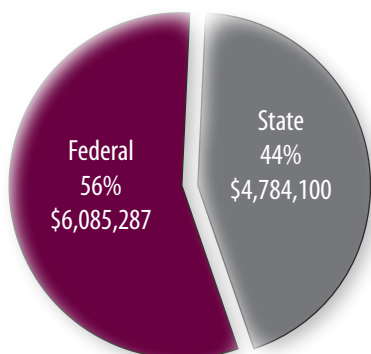
In home and community settings, such as child-care centers, mother's-day-out programs or city parks, youngsters with disabilities are able to become involved in activities with their nondisabled peers. AEIS works together with families, community organizations, and public and private service providers to help with development.



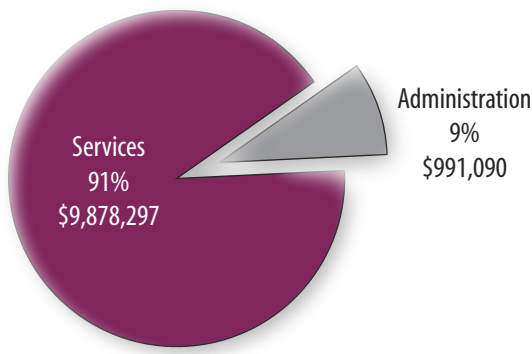
To be eligible for Early Intervention services, a child must be younger than 3 years old and exhibit a 25 percent or greater delay in one or more of the five developmental areas (cognitive, physical, adaptive, social/emotional, speech/language) or have a diagnosed condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay. Infants and toddlers may be referred to AEIS by calling the toll-free Early Intervention Child Find hotline, 1-800-543-3098 (En Español 1-866-450-2838).

EARLY INTERVENTION BY THE NUMBERS

Source of revenue: \$10,869,387



Use of revenue: \$10,869,387



ALABAMA'S EARLY INTERVENTION SYSTEM

fiscal year 2004 highlights

Early Intervention service

- Provided services to 4,351 infants and toddlers and their families in FY '04.
- Provided funding with technical assistance, support and monitoring to 65 local community Early Intervention programs and service coordination agencies statewide to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations.
- Increased referrals and services to eligible families from the state's Hispanic population.

Early Intervention and accountability/quality assurance

- Implemented an Annual Performance Report for the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education, which outlines specific data-driven goals and action steps to document evidence of progress/slippage. This document is available on the ADRS website (www.rehab.state.al.us).
- Maintained a high level of compliance with federal and state rules/regulations in more than 65 early intervention programs through an effective monitoring process (PAR – Provider Appraisal Review).
- Established a formal tracking system to document and resolve issues and concerns expressed by families participating in AEIS. AEIS continued to maintain a high level of family input related to quality and effectiveness of AEIS through the Family Satisfaction survey process. Results from the 2004 survey indicated a high level of satisfaction and are available on the ADRS website.

Early Intervention and collaboration

- Collaborated with the Alabama Academy of Pediatrics and private entities in the state to increase outreach to Alabama's physicians and other health-care providers in order to reach children at an earlier age.

- AEIS continues its partnership with the State Department of Education by providing joint transition trainings for families, EI personnel and preschool staff regarding the change in services as children with disabilities move from Early Intervention to preschool.
- Collaborated with the Alabama Department of Public Health/Perinatal System on the early referral of eligible children with low birth weight including the utilization of district early intervention staff in high risk clinics in the state to facilitate referrals.
- Collaborated with the Alabama Department of Human Resources in implementing CAPTA (Child Abuse Protection and Treatment Act) by developing a new referral system. All infants and toddlers with a substantiated case of abuse and/or neglect are required to be referred to AEIS. Initiated statewide training on AEIS for all DHR social workers.
- Collaborated with the state's Title V program to improve services for Children with Special Health Care Needs under the 2020 planning initiative for family support, medical homes and central resource directory initiatives.

Early Intervention and outreach

- Distributed more than 110,000 AEIS outreach materials requested by families, organizations and agencies and increased the number of materials translated into Spanish.
- Enhanced the AEIS data collection and program accountability capacity through release of a new web-based system to more than 65 local EI programs.
- Increased the availability of AEIS publications, reports and resource information access via the ADRS website with more than 1,600 materials downloaded by families, family support organizations and private and public providers statewide.

EARLY INTERVENTION: GROWING WITH THE FUTURE

	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005*</u>
Referrals	3,184	3,325	3,450	3,849	4,000
Eligible	1,947	2,055	2,036	2,065	2,080
Served	3,843	4,015	4,162	4,351	4,551

* Projected

ALABAMA'S EARLY INTERVENTION SYSTEM

fiscal year 2004 program locations

As part of Alabama's Early Intervention System, the following is a list of program locations for fiscal year 2004. These programs provided supports and services to eligible families in the counties surrounding the city listed.

ANNISTON

ARC of Calhoun and Cleburne County
East Central Alabama UCP Center, Inc.

ANDALUSIA

South Central Alabama Mental Health/Mental Retardation Board, Inc.

AUBURN/OPELIKA

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region VI
Project AIM

BIRMINGHAM

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region III
ARC of Jefferson County, Inc.
Central Alabama Therapy Services, LLC
Children R Us
Children's Health System Early Intervention Program
UAB Sparks Early Intervention
UCP of Greater Birmingham (Hand in Hand)

CULLMAN

Cullman County Center for Developmentally Disabled, Inc. (Todd's Club)

DECATUR

Early Childhood Services of Centers for the Developmentally Disabled (CDD)
North Central Alabama Mental Retardation Authority

DOTHAN

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region VIII
Dothan-Houston County Mental Retardation Board, Inc.
(Vaughn Blumberg Center)

DUTTON

Twin Acres Early Intervention

EUFAULA

Families and Babies, Playing and Learning

FLORENCE

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region I

FORT PAYNE

UCP of Greater Birmingham (Hand in Hand)

GADSDEN

UCP of Greater Birmingham (Hand in Hand)

GUNTERSVILLE

Marshall/Jackson Mental Retardation Authority

HUNTSVILLE

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region II
ARC of Madison County
Madison County Mental Retardation Board
UCP of Huntsville and Tennessee Valley

JASPER

ARC of Walker County
Tri-County MRDD

LOXLEY

UCP of Mobile (Sunrise Program)

McINTOSH

UCP of Mobile (New Journey)

MOBILE

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region IX
Goodwill Easter Seal-Gulf Coast
Gulf Coast Therapy Early Intervention
UCP of Mobile (Project Special Delivery)

MONROEVILLE

Southwest Alabama Mental Health/Mental Retardation Board, Inc.

MONTGOMERY

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region VII
Children's Center of Montgomery, Inc. (PPEI)
The H.O.P.E. Project
Montgomery Area Services for Persons with Mental Retardation
Project Wiggles and Giggles
UCP of Greater Montgomery (Horizon)

MUSCLE SHOALS

Shoals Committee on Programs and Employment for
Mental Retardation 310 Authority (SCOPE)

ONEONTA

UCP of Greater Birmingham (Blount County)

OZARK

Vivian B. Adams Early Intervention

PELHAM

Shelby County ARC/Kids First

PELL CITY

UCP of Greater Birmingham (St. Clair County)

PRATTVILLE

ARC of Autauga/Western Elmore County (EIEIO)

ROBERTSDALE

The MR/DD Board of Baldwin County

SCOTTSBORO

Marshall/Jackson Mental Retardation Authority

SELMA

Cahaba Center Early Intervention

SHEFFIELD

UCP of Northwest Alabama

TALLADEGA

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region IV
ARC of Calhoun/Cleburne Counties
Burton Developmental Center

TROY

UCP of Mobile (Bright Beginnings)

TUSCALOOSA

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region V
Community Service Programs of West Alabama, Inc.
RISE Program

TUSCUMBIA

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Region I

VALLEY

Valley Haven School

WYNFIELD

Tri-County MRDD

ALABAMA'S EARLY INTERVENTION SYSTEM

office locations

STATE OFFICE

2129 E. South Blvd., Montgomery, 36116
334-281-8780, 1-800-499-1816 (TTY)
334-613-3541 (fax)
Child Find Hotline: 1-800-543-3098
www.rehab.state.al.us

BIRMINGHAM

P.O. Drawer 2328
236 Goodwin Crest Drive, 35201
205-290-4550, 1-888-430-7423
205-943-9302 (fax)
Counties: Cullman, Jefferson, Shelby, Walker

DOTHAN

795 Ross Clark Circle
P.O. Drawer 1627, NE, 36302-1627
334-792-0022, 1-800-677-9123
334-702-8442 (fax)
Counties: Barbour, Butler, Coffee, Conecuh, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Geneva, Henry, Houston

HUNTSVILLE

407 Governors Drive, SW, Suite B, 35801
256-536-6621, 1-800-283-9352
256-518-9702 (fax)
Counties: Colbert, Franklin, Jackson, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Morgan, Winston

MOBILE

1610 Center St., Suite A, 36604
251-432-4560, 1-800-879-8163
251-432-8632 (fax)
Counties: Baldwin, Choctaw, Clarke, Escambia, Mobile, Monroe, Washington

MONTGOMERY

2127 E. South Blvd., 36116
334-288-0220, 1-800-441-7607
334-613-3541 (fax)
Counties: Autauga, Bullock, Chambers, Chilton, Coosa, Elmore, Lee, Lowndes, Macon, Montgomery, Pike, Randolph, Russell, Tallapoosa

TALLADEGA

7 Bemiston Ave., 35160
256-362-5832, 1-800-947-7140
256-362-6941 (fax)
Counties: Blount, Calhoun, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, DeKalb, Etowah, St. Clair, Talladega

TUSCALOOSA

1110 Sixth Ave., East, 35401
205-759-1279, 1-800-723-0490
205-344-4072 (fax)
Counties: Bibb, Dallas, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Marengo, Perry, Pickens, Sumter, Tuscaloosa, Wilcox

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION SERVICE

serving children and youth from birth to age 21

Children's Rehabilitation Service provides medical and care coordination to children with special health care needs in homes, schools and other community settings. In addition, CRS provides for local school systems the assessments, evaluations, therapy services and assistive communication devices which enable children with special health care needs to participate fully in school. Through its seven programs, CRS services can be accessed at different times during a child's life.

- *Information and referral*: links families to community resources and services
- *Clinical evaluation*: identifies the unique needs of a child with feeding problems, communication challenges or special diagnostic needs
- *Clinical medical*: operates specialty clinics throughout the state
- *Patient/family education*: provides information necessary to carry out treatment regimens and to make informed choices about services
- *Care coordination*: assists the child and family in identifying, accessing and utilizing community resources to effectively meet their individual needs
- *Parent Connection*: provides a network of family support
- *Youth Connection*: facilitates youth involvement with policy development and decision-making



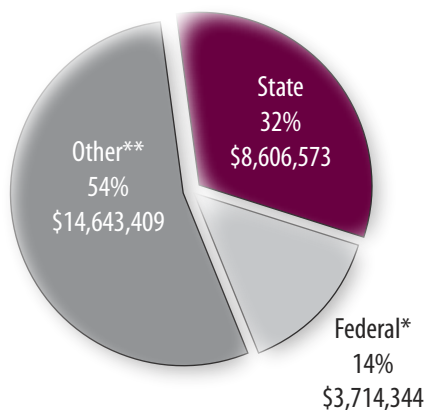
Services are available to any Alabama resident with special health care needs who is younger than 21, while consumers with hemophilia are eligible for services into adulthood. Families can receive services regardless of their income. Financial participation is on a sliding scale, based on each family's needs.

Treatment options vary, ranging from clinical interventions and medication to specialized equipment and therapy services.

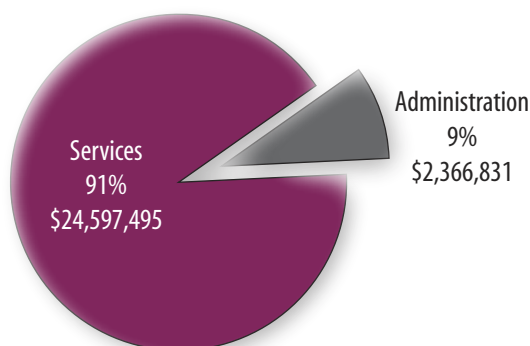
Fifteen community-based offices provide a team approach, bringing together health care specialists from many fields to provide services tailored for each individual family.

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION BY THE NUMBERS

Source of revenue: \$26,964,326



Use of revenue: \$26,964,326



*Federal grants; **Medicaid, insurance reimbursements

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION SERVICE

fiscal year 2004 highlights

Children's Rehabilitation services

- Served 12,016 children and youth with special health care needs through the CRS clinical programs.
- Expended \$724,545 purchasing health care and related services for 549 children and youth with special health care needs who were uninsured for the entire year.
- Provided expanded services to more than 364 children with traumatic brain injury.
- Served 306 consumers with hemophilia.
- Implemented an automated medical billing system and developed a formulary for pharmaceuticals.
- Used telemedicine technology to link children to highly specialized pediatric rehabilitation and genetics providers in tertiary care centers for evaluation and treatment recommendations.

Children's Rehabilitation and education

- Assisted teachers in educating children with special health care needs by providing more than 1,500 visits by nurses, social workers, audiologists, nutritionists, and physical therapists to local school systems.
- Educated teachers, career tech and vocational/tech school professionals on methods for helping students with disabilities in the classroom.
- Provided disability expertise to school nurses statewide regarding children with special health care needs.
- Provided expertise and assistive technology, including digital programmable hearing aids, to students and teachers in Alabama school systems to assist children with disabilities in the classroom.
- Provided free equipment repair and refurbishing prior to the start of the school year for children with special health care needs in Huntsville, Muscle Shoals, and Mobile.

Children's Rehabilitation and collaboration

- Convened six groups of key stakeholders to develop and begin implementation of Alabama's 2010 Action Plan



for Children and Youth With Special Health Care Needs to address national outcome measures related to accessing an organized system of care, family-professional partnerships, medical homes, early screening, adequate insurance coverage and transition services.

- Participated in Medicaid's Oral Health Coalition to improve access and reimbursements for children's dental needs.
- Presented CRS programs through 293 public awareness contacts with 9,207 citizens.

Children's Rehabilitation and transition

- Hosted two Youth Power self-determination workshops.
- Participated in the development of a plan for a collaborative interdepartmental initiative to promote transition services for youth with special health care needs.
- Developed a procedure manual for the Teen Transition Clinic to used in expanding the number of clinic sites.
- Sponsored a state youth consultant to provide youth input into our program and supported her participation on the national board of KASA (Kids as Self Advocates), a project of Family Voices.

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION: GROWING WITH THE FUTURE

Average Number of Children Served Per Quarter: 11,987
Number of New Children Served: 1,903
Number of Encounters with Physicians, Dentists, Staff: 76,147
Average Number of SSI Beneficiaries Younger than 16 Years Served: 3,433

Information and Referral Calls Fielded: 7,352
Number of Service Encounters in Hemophilia Program: 2,461
Number of Clinic Visits: 14,647

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION SERVICE

Hemophilia Program

The Alabama Hemophilia Program (AHP), established in 1975, is administered by the Children's Rehabilitation Service division of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. The purpose of AHP is to provide access to comprehensive, multidisciplinary care to ensure optimal outcomes for Alabamians with hemophilia and related bleeding disorders. The major types of this hereditary disease, which affects predominantly males, are hemophilia A (factor VIII deficiency) and hemophilia B (factor IX deficiency), diagnosed as being mild, moderate or severe. In addition to serving people who have hemophilia, AHP provides services to people with other bleeding disorders. The most common of these is Von Willebrand disease, a condition that affects women as often as it affects men.

The AHP service area covers the entire state. Three-fourths of the population attend clinic at the Birmingham Hemophilia Treatment Center, while the remaining one-fourth attend clinic at the Mobile Hemophilia Treatment Center. The multidisciplinary team available through all components of the program includes board-certified hematologists, orthopedists,

HEMOPHILIA PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Served 288 people
- Served 29 uninsured participants
- Provided two Montgomery satellite pediatric clinics
- Provided 40 outreach programs to educate school personnel, health care professionals, patients and families
- Provided participants with approximately 4 million units of clotting factor for treatment, at a cost of more than \$2.5 million

nurses, social workers, physical therapists, nutritionists, dentists, local parent consultants, and vocational rehabilitation counselors. In addition to the Hemophilia Treatment Center, community-based services offered include care coordination, family support, client/family education, information and referral, home visiting, nursing care, nutritional assessment and counseling, and physical therapy evaluation and therapy as ordered.

In addition to funding received through the Alabama Legislature, AHP also receives a comprehensive care grant from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau totalling \$28,700.

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION SERVICES



- Service coordination
- Physical therapy
- Speech/language therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Hospitalization/surgery
- Social work services
- Patient education/parent resource centers
- Nursing services
- Nutrition counseling
- Assistive technology
- Low-vision services
- Medical services
- Audiological services
- Special dental and orthodontic services
- Laboratory testing
- Medication

CHILDREN'S REHABILITATION SERVICE

office locations

STATE OFFICE

2129 E. South Blvd., Montgomery, 36116
334-281-8780, 1-800-846-3697, 1-800-499-1816 (TTY)
334-613-3553 (fax)
www.rehab.state.al.us

ANDALUSIA

1082 Village Square Drive, Suite 2, 36420
334-222-5558, 1-800-723-8064
334-222-1078 (fax)
Counties: Butler, Conecuh, Covington, Crenshaw

ANNISTON

1010 Christine Ave., Suite 250, 36207
256-235-3050, 1-800-289-9533
256-238-9875 (fax)
Counties: Calhoun, Cherokee,
Clay, Cleburne

BIRMINGHAM

P.O. Drawer 2328
236 Goodwin Crest Drive, 35209
205-290-4550, 1-888-430-7423
205-290-4560 (fax)
Medical Center: 205-939-5900
Counties: Cullman, Jefferson, Shelby, Walker

DOTHAN

795 Ross Clark Circle, NE
P.O. Drawer 1627, 36302-1627
334-792-0022, 1-800-677-9123
334-702-8442 (fax)
Counties: Barbour, Coffee, Dale, Geneva,
Henry, Houston

GADSDEN

1100 George Wallace Drive, 35903
256-547-8653, 1-800-289-1353
256-547-3513 (fax)
Counties: Blount, DeKalb, Etowah

HUNTSVILLE

407 Governors Drive, SW
Suite B, 35801
256-518-8640, 1-800-283-9352
256-518-9702 (fax)
Counties: Jackson, Limestone,
Madison, Marshall, Morgan

JACKSON

1506 College Ave., 36545
251-246-4025, 1-800-283-8140
251-247-1890 (fax)
Counties: Choctaw, Clarke, Monroe,
Washington

MOBILE

1610 Center St., Suite A, 36604
251-432-4560, 1-800-879-8163
251-432-9013 (fax)
Counties: Baldwin, Escambia, Mobile

MONTGOMERY

2127 E. South Blvd., 36116
334-288-0220, 1-800-568-9034
334-284-6557 (fax)
Counties: Autauga, Bullock, Chilton, Coosa,
Elmore, Lowndes, Montgomery, Pike

MUSCLE SHOALS

1450 E. Avalon Ave., 35661
256-381-1212, 1-800-285-9924
256-386-7338 (fax)
Counties: Colbert, Franklin, Lauderdale,
Lawrence, Marion, Winston

OPELIKA

516 W. Thomason Circle, 36801
334-745-7579, 1-800-568-8428
334-749-3530 (fax)
Counties: Chambers, Lee, Macon, Randolph,
Russell, Tallapoosa

SELMA

2906 Citizens Parkway
P.O. Box 750, 36702-0750
334-872-8422, 1-800-967-6876
334-877-3796 (fax)
Counties: Dallas, Marengo, Perry, Wilcox

TALLADEGA

7 Bemiston Ave., 35160
256-362-9254, 1-800-947-7140
256-480-1472 (fax)
Counties: St. Clair, Talladega

TUSCALOOSA

1110 Sixth Ave., East
P.O. Drawer 2817, 35403-2817
205-759-1279, 1-800-723-0490
205-344-4072 (fax)
Counties: Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar,
Pickens, Sumter, Tuscaloosa

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICE

serving teenagers and adults

Vocational Rehabilitation Service (VRS) provides specialized employment- and education-related services and training to assist teens and adults with disabilities in becoming employed. The largest division within the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, VRS markets its trained, job-ready clients and a wide range of consultant services to Alabama's business community. The division offers specialized employment-related assistance to more than 44,000 adults and adolescents with disabilities each year. In addition, VRS works with middle schools, high schools, junior colleges and universities statewide to assist students with disabilities in receiving appropriate educational opportunities.

The types of services available through VRS are as varied as the people it serves and are designed specifically to meet the needs of each individual. Available through any of the 21 VRS offices statewide, services can include educational services; vocational assessment, evaluation and counseling; medical treatment; job training; assistive technology; orientation and mobility training; and job placement. To be eligible for VRS services, individuals must have a physical or mental impairment that is a substantial impediment to employment and must be able to benefit from services in terms of going to work.

Employment is the goal for every VRS participant, regardless of age or disability. In fiscal year 2004, a record-setting 7,710 people with disabilities achieved their dream of employment, thanks to VRS services. VRS helps each person match his



or her talents with the right career. Then, VRS links the person to its extensive network of employers through its Employer Account System.

VRS is a vast, coordinated network that creates a remarkable return on taxpayers' investment. For each dollar expended on a VRS consumer who becomes employed, \$21.13 is returned to the economy through employment.* And for Alabamians with disabilities, VRS represents much more than a monetary return. Employment means pride, dignity and independence – being empowered to achieve one's maximum potential.

**Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration*

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SPECIALTY PROGRAMS

Transition Service: Helps high school students with disabilities to prepare for post-secondary education, employment and community living through employment training and support services.

Supported Employment: Assists Alabamians with the most significant disabilities, offering intensive on-site job training and support services including job coaches.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Care Coordination: Assists persons with TBI and their families in preparing for the return to the community and assists with appropriate vocational rehabilitation services in preparation for entering or returning to school or the workplace.

Blind and Deaf Services: Rehabilitation teaching provides instruction in

the use of adaptive techniques and equipment for people who are visually impaired; orientation and mobility specialists provide instruction in the use of compensatory skills and adaptive devices to enable people with visual impairments to travel independently; interpreters are available to assist those with hearing impairments in their job searches.

Business Enterprise Program (BEP): Provides qualified blind individuals with job training and employment opportunities through the management and operation of snack bars, vending facilities, gift shops and cafeterias.

OASIS (Older Alabamians System of Information and Services): Assists Alabamians 55 and older with vision problems in living more independently in their homes and communities.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICE

fiscal year 2004 highlights

Vocation Rehabilitation services

- Provided services to 44,094 Alabamians, including rehabilitation, education- and employment-related services.
- Assisted a record 7,710 Alabamians with disabilities in becoming successfully employed at an average wage of \$7.77 an hour.
- Return on investment: for each \$1 expended on successfully rehabilitating a consumer, \$21.13 is returned to the economy through his or her employment.*
- Continued the Welfare-to-Work grant, which helps welfare recipients with disabilities enter the world of competitive employment.
- Implemented a sliding fee scale for services contingent upon economic need, resulting in a more consistent service-delivery process for services.

Vocational Rehabilitation and education

- Served more than 16,006 Alabama students with disabilities in transitioning from school to work.
- Continued to serve 75 school systems through joint funding of 80 full-time job coaches.
- Educated teachers, career technology and vocational/technology school professionals on means and methods of

helping students with disabilities prepare for the labor market.

- Provided rehabilitation technology assistance to VRS consumers, educational personnel, and employers in order to move VRS consumers into competitive employment.

Vocational Rehabilitation and collaboration

- Continued the Alabama Head and Spinal Cord Registry for Survivors of Spinal Cord and Traumatic Brain Injury in Alabama in conjunction with the Alabama Department of Public Health, the Head Injury Foundation, and the UAB Center for Injury Sciences.
- Continued expansion into one-stop career centers through increased staff and resources to provide disability services and expertise to consumers with disabilities, employers and other one-stop career center partners.

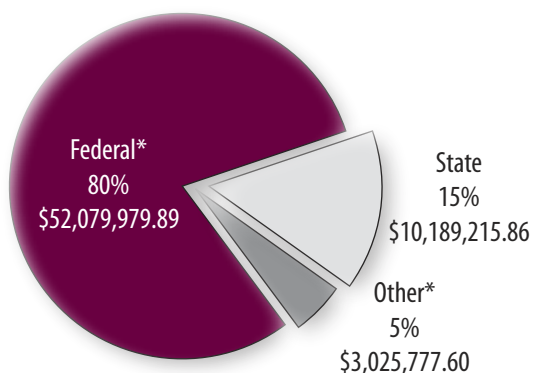
Vocational Rehabilitation and business

- Provided 7,600 disability management and employee placement services to Alabama businesses.
- Upgraded the statewide VRS Internet Job Bank system to allow employers to view potential VRS job applicants for employment.

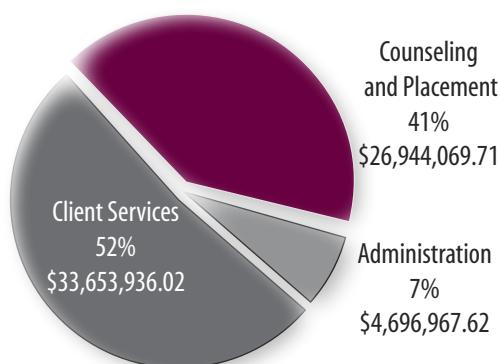
*Source: U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION BY THE NUMBERS

Source of revenue: \$65,294,973.35



Use of revenue: \$65,294,973.35



*Social Security reimbursements

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICE

program highlights

Blind and Deaf Services

The Blind/Deaf section provides assistance to Alabamians through its Blind Services, Deaf Services and OASIS (Older Alabamians System of Information and Services) programs. In fiscal year 2004, VRS rehabilitation counselors for the blind and deaf served more than 5,000 individuals with significant vision or hearing disabilities through individual employment programs. These services assisted 1,116 individuals with significant visual and hearing impairments in entering the workplace.

In FY 2004, this section also:

- Provided rehabilitation teaching instruction and services in functional independent living skills to 1,525 citizens of Alabama who are blind or visually impaired to allow them to pursue employment or function independently.
- Provided instruction and services to 1,297 senior citizens through the older blind who have age-related blindness to assist them in maintaining or gaining independent living skills to allow them to remain in their homes.
- Taught 339 adults how to travel independently using a white cane.
- Supported 16 consumer support groups, thus assisting consumers in adjusting to their vision loss through interaction with older adults who also are experiencing vision loss.
- Partnered with University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) and the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind to provide a personal planning workshop for students who are deaf-blind with significant multiple disabilities and their parents.
- Collaborated with the Department of Public Safety in developing and deploying a kiosk system that provides the nation's first drivers license test in American Sign Language.
- Provided sponsorship for the Alabama Radio Reading Services for the visually impaired.
- Provided interpreter services to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Expanded the ADRS/Lakeshore Rehabilitation Facility program to identify individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing and have a learning disability or cognitive disorder.
- Received a Workforce Investment In School Work Grant to develop leadership and employment skills for deaf and hearing impaired youth to assist them in the transition to independence and employment.

- Reviewed and renewed a three-year strategic plan for services to deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals. Input into the plan included a statewide meeting of stakeholders and focus groups made up of consumers, partner agencies and ADRS staff.

- Developed a three-year strategic plan for services to blind and visually impaired individuals. Input was received through a statewide stakeholders meeting and focus groups that included organizations of blind consumers, partner agencies and ADRS staff.

Business Enterprise Program

The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) provides qualified blind individuals with job training and employment opportunities through the management and operation of small businesses that provide independence through self-employment.

The program provides self-employment for 132 blind vendors and licensees in vending machine facilities, vending routes, snack bars, cafeterias, washeterias, a gift shop, four military dining hall operations, and a Federal Food Service contract at Fort McClellan.

Alabama's BEP operates 102 vending machine locations, more than any program in the U.S.

While data for FY 2004 is being gathered, during FY 2003 Alabama's blind vendors employed 443 Alabamians, including visually impaired individuals, in various capacities in their businesses. In FY 2003, gross sales were \$17,051,411.

Projections from FY 2004 data indicate that the average annual earnings for Alabama's BEP vendors will increase for the seventh consecutive year. Since FY 1996, individual annual earnings have increased from \$22,175 to \$32,900 in FY 2003, a rise of more than 48 percent. It is anticipated that average earnings in FY 2004 will be the highest in program history.

In FY 2004, this program also:

- Secured its first-ever dining hall contract with the U.S. Center for Domestic Preparedness in Anniston. A veteran vendor, JoAnn Freeman, was selected to be the manager of this United States Department of Homeland Security location.
- Added a food service specialist to its staff to aid in the effectiveness and efficiency of its various snack bar and cafeteria operations. This assistance will focus on inventory control, food production, loss prevention, marketing, quality control, product procurement, and data analysis.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICE

program highlights

Community Rehabilitation Programs

The Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) network of mostly private, nonprofit organizations has been providing services to ADRS consumers for more than 70 years. This network of providers is located throughout Alabama. Services provided include individualized programming, vocational evaluation, case management, employability development, vocational and academic skills training, job placement, job coaching and job retention – all of which assist ADRS consumers in obtaining and maintaining employment.

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services operates the Lakeshore Rehabilitation Center located in Birmingham. This CRP assists people with severe disabilities in achieving their dreams – whether they lead directly into employment, vocational training or college. Programs are based on the needs of the consumer, are individualized and may include vocational assessment to identify vocational skills, abilities and career goals. Lakeshore's College Preparation program and its services for individuals with specific learning disabilities are nationally recognized.

In FY '04, Lakeshore Rehabilitation Center:

- Served more than 1,150 consumers and provided more than 1,300 programs.
- Placed a new van with adaptive equipment in service for

consumers who require high levels of technology to drive.

- Held the first Career Preparation Training Initiative class partnering with the Homewood VRS office and local schools and employers. The targeted population included students in transition seeking an occupational diplomas.
- Took evaluation services to all areas of the state, enabling consumers to be served in their home areas rather than traveling to Birmingham for vocational assessment.
- Continued to expand deaf services to all areas of state

In Opelika, the Work Center, a subsidiary of the Achievement Center-Easter Seals, provides organizational employment and training opportunities for individuals with severe disabilities. Established in 1975, the Work Center is a manufacturing facility providing goods and services to industries such as Briggs & Stratton, Falk, Tenneco Packaging, Uniroyal, Goodrich/Michelin Tire Company, Leland Powell Fasteners and many others. The center currently employs 20 individuals, while providing job training to many ADRS consumers.

Chosen as the 2004 Organization of the Year by the Alabama Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, the Work Center continues to be a valuable partner with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services and the consumers served in the Auburn-Opelika area.

ADRS NETWORK OF COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

ADRS Lakeshore Rehabilitation Center, Birmingham

Other community rehabilitation programs:

ANNISTON

Opportunity Center-Easter Seals

BIRMINGHAM

Easter Seals of the Birmingham Area
Glenwood Mental Health Services
Goodwill Industries of Alabama
Workshops, Inc.

DECATUR

Tennessee Valley Rehabilitation Center

DOTHAN

Wiregrass Rehabilitation Center

GADSDEN

Darden Rehabilitation Foundation

HUNTSVILLE

Huntsville Rehabilitation Foundation

MOBILE

Goodwill/Easter Seals of the Gulf Coast
Mobile Association for the Blind

MONTGOMERY

Easter Seals Central Alabama
Goodwill Industries of Central Alabama
Janice Capilouto Center for the Deaf-Easter Seals

MARC

MUSCLE SHOALS

Easter Seals Rehabilitation Center, Northwest Alabama

OPELIKA

Achievement Center-Easter Seals

Samaritan & Associates

PRATTVILLE

Smith Center

SELMA

West Central Alabama Easter Seals
Rehabilitation Center

TALLADEGA

E.H. Gentry Technical Facility

TUSCALOOSA

Easter Seals West Alabama

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICE

program highlights

Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities

The Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (Governor's Committee) works closely with Vocational Rehabilitation staff, community service providers and employers to increase public awareness regarding the abilities and availability of people with disabilities across the state.

Through partnerships with local affiliated committees, the Governor's Committee sponsors events and programs throughout the year to help promote people with disabilities.

- *National Disability Employment Awareness Month*
October is a month-long celebration of the successes of employees and employers in the hiring and promotion of people with disabilities in the local community. In 2004, 19 local affiliated committees sponsored recognition events honoring 91 individuals and 61 businesses for their continued commitment to include people with disabilities in Alabama's workforce.

- *ABLE Network (Alabama Business Leadership Employment Network)*

Fiscal year 2004 was the official kickoff event for the Alabama model of the Business Leadership Network (BLN). More than 100 businesses participated in the "Accessing Untapped Human Capital" seminar unveiling the state of the art electronic Job Candidate Recruiting and Job Posting Webster of the Business Leadership Network, ABLE Network. The ABLE Network partnered with VRS to provide employers access to an electronic job candidate pool of more than 2,500 individuals who are ready to enter the job market. In turn, employers can post available employment opportunities that can be accessed by rehabilitation service professionals throughout the state.

- *Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum*

The Governor's Committee and Troy University joined together in conducting the 6th Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) for students with disabilities. Thirty-three student delegates were selected to participate in the five-day forum on the Troy campus in June. The highlight of the weeklong event was a trip to the state capital where delegates met state Rep. David Grimes, R-Montgomery, who shared his experience living with a disability, as well as Lt.

Gov. Lucy Baxley and Gov. Bob Riley. Learning more about self-advocacy and the legislative process helps to develop the student's leadership skills for a successful transition to adult life. The 111 alumni of previous YLF programs were invited back for a weekend reunion to continue the leadership process.

- *"Ability Counts" High School Poster/Journalism Contest*
Through a 56-year partnership with the Department of Industrial Relations' veterans program, the Governor's Committee continued to sponsor the High School Poster/Journalism Contest. The theme for FY 2004 was "America Works Best When All Americans Work." Fifty-seven high school juniors and seniors demonstrated their talents in written and artistic form to heighten the awareness of people with disabilities in the workforce. The winners were honored at a luncheon.

Traumatic Brain Injury Care System

Cutting across all physical, socioeconomic, and cultural lines, traumatic brain injury (TBI) has lifelong, far-reaching effects for individuals, their families and their environment.

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services has been working in this arena for the past 20 years and collaborates with numerous partners, including the Alabama Head Injury Foundation (AHIF), the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), and the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). The quality of life for many Alabamians affected by TBI and/or spinal cord injury has been improved through services funded by the Impaired Drivers Trust Fund (IDTF) and ADRS.

ADRS is proud to have been designated the lead agency in Alabama for TBI. To many, TBI is a relatively new disability field, but ADRS and its partners have been at the forefront for service and information delivery in this area.

As the lead agency in TBI, ADRS serves as a source of information, education and resources for survivors, professionals, agencies and organizations. Through this special initiative, more than 2,100 individuals with TBI were assisted in FY 2004 with community re-integration; service linkage; housing; respite care; independent living services; resource coordination; attendant care; medical supplies; assistive equipment; cognitive, recreational, and vocational rehabilitation; and for many, ultimately, employment.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICE

program highlights

Transition Service

ADRS transition from school to work services help to ensure that Alabama's students with disabilities leave school as independent, productive and contributing members of their communities. During FY 2004, ADRS continued to expand and improve collaborative interagency transition programs. Transition students continued to make up more than one-third of all individuals served and placed into employment by ADRS counselors.

The transition program also continued to strengthen the jointly funded job coach program with more than 75 local school systems across the state. This \$2.5 million program is designed to place students with disabilities who are in their final year of school into competitive jobs in their local communities before they leave high school. The program is cooperatively managed by local Vocational Rehabilitation Service offices and school system staff and during FY 2004 provided services to more than 2,000 students through 80 job coaches. In addition, students, parents, rehabilitation counselors, local school special and regular education staff, and the job coaches work together to plan for students' successful and smooth transition to adult life and work.

In FY 2004, ADRS also continued efforts to develop and improve transition partnerships, programs and service models to meet the needs of students with more significant disabilities and barriers to employment and community living. Other highlights of FY 2004 include:

- Collaboration with the Montgomery County Board of Education, the Special Education Division of the Department of Education, and the Autism Society to develop a model program.
- Continuation of specialized services for students with specific learning disabilities and/or attention deficit disorders.
- Continuation of the College Prep Program offered at six sites around the state. This program was recognized by the Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD) organization as an "Innovative Project."
- Collaboration with the Special Education Division of the Alabama Department of Education and the Department of Corrections to implement the Prison Transition Initiative for youthful offenders.

- Continuation and expansion of projects funded by Workforce Investment Act Youth Programs including the Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum (YLF), a weeklong opportunity for high school students to interact with other students with disabilities, and Transition Weekend for students who have visual impairments.
- Collaboration with Children's Rehabilitation Service to provide Teen Transition Clinic.

Supported Employment

In an effort to assist individuals with the most-severe disabilities in becoming employed, supported employment provides community-based assessments, job-site training and support services to ensure quality job performance and stability. These services are funded through Milestones, an outcome-based payment system.

In FY 2004, The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services funded 29 agencies across the state to provide supported employment. More than 500 individuals were referred for supported employment. Of this number, 366 obtained competitive employment and 306 were successfully closed. These individuals averaged working more than 22 hours per week and earned an average hourly wage of \$5.78 per hour. Also, 634 individuals are being followed in long-term support across the state. These numbers represent approximately a 20 percent increase in outcomes over FY 2003 – making 2004 the most successful year in supported employment for ADRS since the implementation of Milestones in 1999. Three additional agencies will be funded in 2005, providing services in areas of the state not previously offering supported employment services.

ADRS continues to collaborate closely with the Alabama Association for Persons in Supported Employment (AL-APSE). FY 2004 marked the largest and most successful supported employment conference in the six-year history of AL-APSE.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICE

program highlights

Services for Employers

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services has a 20-year history of partnering with Alabama employers to create opportunities for both employers and the consumers served by its Vocational Rehabilitation Service (VRS) division. As part of that commitment, the department has staffed a team of 17 employer development coordinators to develop and maintain winning partnerships with employers, providing a wide array of services to meet their needs.

Expertise and services

These services have been custom-designed with input from business and industry and cover the gamut of disability-related expertise:

- recruitment of pre-screened and qualified job candidates
- assistance with retention of valued workers whose jobs are affected by disability
- in-service training or consultation on “hot” employment topics such as lowering the cost of disability management; architectural accessibility; job site accommodation dialogue, ideas and resources; interviewing do’s & don’ts; and a host of other issues
- rehabilitation engineering assistance

Collaboration

VRS has committed both staff and dollars to developing expertise and services for unique populations of job candidates through its many employment programs and affiliations that include:

- VRS Employer Development Coordinator Team
- VRS School-to-Work Transition Program
- VRS Supported Employment Program (Milestones)
- Community Rehabilitation Programs
- VRS Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
- VRS-supported Business Leadership Network

VRS staff who provide leadership to these initiatives have completed a Strategic Plan for Collaboration among Employment Resources focusing on collaborative work among VRS staff and their affiliates when providing employment readiness and placement assistance to VRS consumers and when developing partnerships and providing services to employers. This will be accomplished over the next two fiscal years through specific goals:

- Internal collaboration among the more than 200 specialty staff and rehabilitation affiliates who work with consumers on employment

EMPLOYER SERVICES BY THE NUMBERS

Unduplicated tally of employer accounts or contacts: **863**

Total services to these employers: **7,600**

(Top 3 services: job vacancy recruitment, screen and refer candidates, and follow-up services)

Total number of consumers served (or being served): **1,833**

Total number of services to consumers: **11,196**

(Top services: job search assistance, referral to business, job development, career exploration)

Total number of consumers hired: **920**

- Leveraging of employer partnerships statewide
- Outreach and collaboration with non-VRS employment programs that assist VRS consumers with employment activities

Regional and National Business Partnerships

Capitalizing on the successful partnerships that sister vocational rehabilitation programs have developed in surrounding states, VRS also leads a regional initiative to leverage employer contacts from state to state. This regional Employment Partners Team has strategically positioned the public VR program in the Southeast to be the employers’ resource of choice for work-force needs. Their goal is to expand state VR agency penetration of the existing employer marketplace and further develop untapped markets through a regional approach. This team is now serving as a model for the rest of the country in the development of a national network as well.

On the national front, Alabama VR is part of a steering committee that is working to build a national VR-business network. Its intent is to create a simple way for businesses who have a multi-state presence to connect with VR agencies throughout the country to access job candidates or other disability-related services.

WHAT EMPLOYERS SAY ABOUT VRS

MANUFACTURING COMPANIES

AmeriSourceBergen

"VR has opened up a whole new avenue for us in hiring quality, caring associates. They have come in, viewed our facility and know our needs. They send us only qualified candidates and assure that our needs are met far and beyond any resource we've used."

— Mike Peterson, Operations Manager

Amerex

"It's been a very long-term relationship with VR. We've hired people that have been here 10, 15, 20 years. They know the company, the job requirements, and our culture. They don't just 'place' people. They do extensive screening and work orientation. It has shortened recruiting time."

— Reba Glidewell, Personnel Manager

Degussa-Huls

"One of the keys of working with VR was their openness and immediate response to our need. Within a day or two, they were on site and participating openly in our in-depth job analysis. They followed through completely and it was a win-win. We were able to retain our disabled employee and that was our goal from the start."

— Glen Serotsky, Manager

CUSTOMER SERVICE COMPANIES

Compass Bank

"They really go the extra mile to ensure that the people we hire from them present our corporate principles to our customer. I've worked with VR approximately eight years and have always found them to be truly professional and very focused on the needs of the employer, not just on the individual they're trying to place. They've assisted us with ADA issues, evaluations for accommodations and they help us retain employees who become disabled. They're willing to come back any time. And all of these services are free of charge."

— Michael Ballew, VP/Manager

TeleTech

"VR sends us candidates that we know will be long-term employees and that are successful in the operation of our business. They ask: 'Let me see what you do so I can understand it, know it and recruit to it.' They know what we do as well as I do. They've assisted us with everything from disability and sensitivity training through financial assistance with technology and accommodation ideas."

— Tim Hinds, Regional Recruiting Manager

Sears, Roebuck & Company

"VR has really taken the time to understand our position qualifications and, with that, they're very careful to send us individuals who meet those qualifications. They've saved us time in recruiting. This in turn saves us time in training these individuals once we hire them. VR wants a successful placement. That's the goal for both of us."

— Cheryl Rivas, Sourcing and Staffing Specialist

GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

"The type and talent of people we get from VR are outstanding. What I like in particular is that they come to us and ask what our needs are."

— Wayne Urbine, Deputy District Engineer

Social Security Administration

"We have brought on some wonderful employees from VR that have been successful. These employees have trained well and done the job."

— Ken Corder, Staff Assistant

SERVICE INDUSTRIES

Hilton Hotel

"We get numerous customer comment cards on the employees we've hired from VR with comments about their attentiveness and smile. VR staff know the work ethic we need here and they spend the time looking at our work areas. This is key to our successful placements."

— Mike Holland, Director of Human Resources

O'Charley's

"These are dependable employees from VR . . . always here for their scheduled shift . . . always on time . . . and they do a good job. The rehab folks spend time with us and ask what our needs are. They eliminate all the guess work."

— Jack Cordray, General Manager

Ramada

"We get dependable employees from VR. They understand our positions and this reduces down time in looking for good employees and it reduces training time. They keep in touch to see how the employee is doing. They come and look at what more they can do for us. Also, the cost of advertising and training go down when we work with them."

— Raj Champaneri, Owner, Ramada Limited

RURAL / SMALL BUSINESSES

YMCA

"The disability of the referrals has been no problem at all. The greatest service from rehab has been the job accommodations."

— John Cheeley, CEO, local YMCA

Helen Keller Hospital

"We're in a field where it's difficult to recruit people. We've been very successful in working with VR in this area."

— Mike Lockhart, Support Services Director

"We've used a job coach from VR on site and we spend less time in training. We don't need to advertise as much now either."

— Pat Patton, Human Resources

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICE

program highlights

Rehabilitation Technology

Rehabilitation technology is the systematic application of technologies, engineering methodologies, or scientific principles to meet the needs of and address the barriers confronting people with disabilities in areas including education, rehabilitation, employment, transportation, communication, independent living, and recreation.

Rehabilitation Technology Specialists (RTS) are part of a statewide team of engineers and designers who provide assistive technology and rehabilitation engineering services to Alabama's children and adults with disabilities. ADRS employs six rehabilitation technology specialists working in rehabilitation offices in Decatur, Birmingham, Montgomery, Dothan and Mobile.

In FY 2004, approximately 23 percent more people with disabilities received assistive technology services from the RTS team than in FY 2003.

- A rehabilitation

technology internship program was established to recruit and train undergraduate engineering students in hopes of convincing them to pursue a career in rehabilitation technology. One such internship in 2004 led to fulltime employment, filling the rehabilitation technology specialist vacancy in the Dothan office.

- Training was provided to the RTS team to improve their skills in providing accessibility surveys and industrial ergonomic task analysis.
- Rehabilitation technology specialists continued to participate as clinic team members in augmentative communication technology clinics, teen transition clinics, and physical capacity evaluation clinics.
- Additional evaluation equipment was purchased to enable the RTS to provide improved and more timely assistive technology evaluations.
- The RTS team increased collaboration and networking with the technology staff at E.H. Gentry and other

REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

- Job accommodations
- Basic accommodation installation and repair
- Task analysis
- Home modification consultation
- Transportation/mobility consultation
- Architectural accessibility walk-through survey
- Architectural accessibility basic facility survey
- Product searches/information and referral
- Augmentative communication assessments
- Ergonomic equipment demonstrations

community-based rehabilitation programs to share knowledge and resources in an effort to improve assistive technology services to ADRS consumers.

- The RTS team continued to train, educate, and increase awareness by providing assistive technology information and training to ADRS staff, college students, job coaches, community rehabilitation program staff, employers, and the general public.

In FY 2004, rehabilitation technology specialists also:

- Provided 367 assistive device services to ADRS consumers.
- Provided 79 engineering design services to 67 ADRS consumers.
- Evaluated 282 distinct ADRS consumers for assistive technology.
- Provided one or more services to 416 ADRS consumers.

Statewide Technology Access and Response (STAR)

The Statewide Technology Access and Response System for Alabamians with Disabilities (STAR) is Alabama's technology related assistance program.

In FY 2004, STAR:

- Directly provided advocacy and technical information to consumers and professionals statewide.
- Experienced significant growth in the equipment-recycling program. The newest expansion site has increased its inventory and added an additional storage facility for incoming equipment and repairs.
- Through its financial loan program, continued to provide alternative funding for individuals purchasing assistive technology.



VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICE

office locations

STATE OFFICE

2129 E. South Blvd., Montgomery 36116
334-281-8780, 1-800-441-7607, 1-800-499-1816 (TTY)
334-281-1973 (fax)
www.rehab.state.al.us

ANDALUSIA

1082 Village Square Drive, Suite 1, 36420
334-222-4114, 1-800-671-6833
334-427-1216 (fax)
Counties: Butler, Coffee, Conecuh, Covington, Crenshaw, Pike

ANNISTON

1105 Woodstock Ave., 36207
256-238-9300, 1-800-671-6834
256-231-4852 (fax)
Counties: Calhoun, Cleburne, Randolph

BIRMINGHAM

Lakeshore Rehabilitation Facility
P.O. Box 59127, 3830 Ridgeway Drive, 35209
205-870-5999, 1-800-441-7609
205-879-2685 (fax)
Statewide

HOMEWOOD (Birmingham)

P.O. Box 19888, 236 Goodwin Crest Drive, 35209
205-290-4400, 1-800-671-6837
205-290-0486 (fax)
Counties: Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby

COLUMBIANA

Community Services Building
P.O. Box 856, 35051-0856
205-669-3829, 205-669-0605 (fax)
County: Shelby

DECATUR

621 Cherry St., NE
P.O. Box 1686, 35602
256-353-2754, 1-800-671-6838
256-351-2476 (fax)
Counties: Cullman, Lawrence, Limestone, Morgan

DOTHAN

795 Ross Clark Circle, NE, 36303
334-792-0022, 1-800-275-0132
334-792-1783 (fax)
Counties: Barbour, Dale, Geneva, Henry, Houston

GADSDEN

1100 George Wallace Drive, 35903
256-547-6974, 1-800-671-6839
256-543-1784 (fax)
Counties: Cherokee, DeKalb, Etowah, Marshall, St. Clair

HUNTSVILLE

2939 Johnson Road, SW, 35805
256-650-8219, 1-800-671-6840
256-650-8250 (fax)
Counties: Jackson, Madison

JACKSON

1401 Forest Ave., P.O. Box 1005, 36545
251-246-5708, 1-800-671-6836
251-246-5224 (fax)
Counties: Choctaw, Clarke, Monroe, Washington

JASPER

301 N. Walston Bridge Road
Suite 116, 35504
205-221-7840, 1-800-671-6841
205-221-1062 (fax)
Counties: Marion, Walker, Winston

MOBILE

2419 Gordon Smith Drive, 36617
251-479-8611, 1-800-671-6842
251-478-2197 (fax)
Counties: Baldwin, Choctaw, Clarke, Escambia, Mobile, Monroe, Washington

MONTGOMERY

2127 E. South Blvd., 36116
334-288-0220, 1-800-441-7578
334-281-1388 (fax)
Counties: Autauga, Bullock, Elmore, Macon, Montgomery

MUSCLE SHOALS

1450 E. Avalon Ave., 35661
256-381-1110, 1-800-275-0166
256-389-3149 (fax)
Counties: Colbert, Franklin, Lauderdale

OPELIKA

520 W. Thomason Circle, 36801
334-749-1259, 1-800-671-6835
334-749-8753 (fax)
Counties: Chambers, Lee, Macon, Russell, Tallapoosa

SCOTTSBORO

P.O. Box 296, 203 S. Market St., 35768
256-574-5813, 1-800-418-8823
256-574-6033 (fax)
County: Jackson

SELMA

2906 Citizens Parkway, 36701
334-872-8422, 1-888-761-5995
334-877-3796 (fax)
Counties: Dallas, Lowndes, Wilcox

TALLADEGA

#4 Medical Office Park, 35160
256-362-1300, 1-800-441-7592
256-362-6387 (fax)
Counties: Clay, Coosa, Randolph, St. Clair, Talladega

THOMASVILLE

Thomasville Rehabilitation Center
P.O. Box 1006, Adams Building,
Bashi Road, 36784
334-636-5421, 1-800-335-3237
334-636-4618 (fax)
Counties: Choctaw, Clarke, Monroe, Washington

TROY

518 S. Brundidge St., 36081
334-566-2491, 1-800-441-7608
334-566-9415 (fax)
Counties: Barbour, Bullock, Butler, Crenshaw, Pike

TUSCALOOSA

1305 37th St., E, P.O. Drawer 1610, 35403-1610
205-554-1300, 1-800-331-5562
205-554-1369 (fax)
Counties: Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Marengo, Marion, Perry, Pickens, Sumter, Tuscaloosa, Walker, Winston

STATE OF ALABAMA INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICE

serving Alabamians with severe disabilities

The State of Alabama Independent Living (SAIL) Service provides specialized in-home education and counseling, attendant care, training and medical services to Alabamians with severe disabilities. The SAIL program has seven community-based offices located throughout the state to serve residents in all 67 counties.

SAIL ensures the consumer can live as independently as possible at home and in the community through three specialized programs.

Homebound Services

This program provides a wide range of education and home-based services to assist people with severe disabilities in leading more independent lives. To be eligible for this program, a person must:

- be an Alabama resident
- be at least 16 years old
- have a medical diagnosis of traumatic brain injury or quadriplegia
- be dependent on others for assistance with activities of daily living
- demonstrate financial need

Independent Living Support Services

The goal of this program is to enhance and promote independence in the home, community and workplace. To be eligible a person must:

- have a severe disability that limits his or her ability to live independently
- provide evidence that by receiving this service, his or her potential to achieve independence will improve

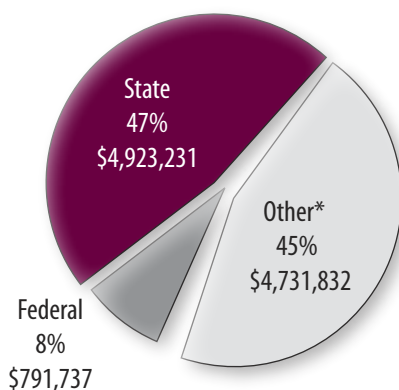
Waiver Services

This special Medicaid Waiver allows SAIL to maximize its resources and access additional programs and services for the individuals served. To be eligible for services through the waiver, a person must:

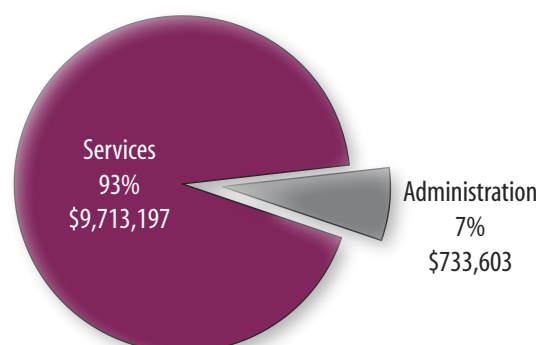
- be at least 18 years old
- be medically and financially eligible for a nursing home
- have experienced the onset of the disability before age 60
- have a disability as a result of reasons other than aging

INDEPENDENT LIVING BY THE NUMBERS

Source of revenue: \$10,446,00



Use of revenue: \$10,446,00



*Medicaid reimbursements

STATE OF ALABAMA INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICE

program highlights

Independent Living services

- Assisted more than 1,700 Alabamians with the severest disabilities in remaining in their homes and communities rather than in nursing homes or other institutions
 - 615 consumers in the Homebound Program
 - 488 consumers in the Independent Living Service
 - 589 consumers in the Medicaid Waiver Program
- Provided services to consumers and families in all 67 counties through seven SAIL teams located statewide. SAIL teams of registered nurses, rehabilitation counselors and independent living specialists provide individualized services and training to SAIL consumers and their families about the unique problems and needs presented by each differing disability. SAIL teams also teach activities of daily living, health, safety and nutrition as well as the use of assistive technology. In addition, SAIL teams educate SAIL consumers and their families about self-advocacy, empowering them to access services.



Competitive Employment (MOCCE) grant through the U.S. Department of Labor, WorkForce Coordinating Grant, allowing for the identification of employment barriers for persons with severe disabilities in Alabama. Grant funds were used in the development of a strategic plan to help alleviate these barriers.

- In conjunction with the MOCCE project, began developing the Alabama Customized Employment (ACE) pilot program through another Department of Labor grant. This WorkForce Action Grant allows for the placement of two customized employment specialists in the one-stop career centers in Montgomery and Anniston. The ACE project will develop innovative strategies in employment placements for persons with the most severe disabilities. In FY 2004, more than 50 participants were served by ACE.
- Continued to develop resources to supplement limited funding with donated goods and services. In the past year, independent living specialists secured donations of \$240,063.79.

Independent Living and collaboration

- In partnership with the Alabama Medicaid Agency, began implementing a proposal under the Ticket to Work and Work Incentive Improvement Act (TWWIIA) to use Infrastructure Grant Funds to add Personal Assistance Service (PAS) as an additional waiver service. This program allows SAIL to provide services for working individuals who need personal assistance services outside the home in an employment setting.
- Used the ADRS Recycling Centers, donated goods and services, in-kind services, and community resources to serve consumers throughout the state

Independent Living and acquisition of resources

- Was awarded the Maximize Opportunities to Customized

INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| • Attendant care | • Nursing management | • Peer counseling |
| • Personal assistance services for working participants | • Home modifications | • Training in activities for daily living |
| • Patient and family education | • Disability-related prescriptions | • Information and referral |
| • Counseling and guidance | • Disability-related medical supplies | |

STATE OF ALABAMA INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICE

office locations

STATE OFFICE

2129 E. South Blvd., Montgomery, 36116
334-281-8780, 1-800-441-7607, TTY: 1-800-499-1816
334-613-3542 (fax)
www.rehab.state.al.us

ANNISTON

1105 Woodstock Ave., 36207
256-238-9300, 1-800-671-6834
256-231-4852 (fax)
Counties: Calhoun, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa,
DeKalb, Etowah, Marshall, Randolph, St. Clair, Talladega

DECATUR

621 Cherry St., NE, 35601
256-353-2754, 1-800-671-6838
256-351-2476 (fax)
Counties: Colbert, Cullman, Franklin, Jackson,
Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Morgan

DOTHAN

795 Ross Clark Circle, NE, 36303
334-792-0022, 1-800-275-0132
334-792-1783 (fax)
Counties: Barbour, Butler, Coffee, Conecuh, Covington,
Crenshaw, Dale, Geneva, Henry, Houston, Pike

HOMEWOOD (Birmingham)

P.O. Box 19888
236 Goodwin Crest Drive, 35209
205-290-4400, 1-800-671-6837
205-945-8517 (fax)
Counties: Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby

MOBILE

2419 Gordon Smith Drive, 36617
251-479-8611, 1-888-388-3245
251-478-2198 (fax)
Counties: Baldwin, Choctaw, Clarke, Escambia, Mobile,
Monroe, Washington

MONTGOMERY

2127 E. South Blvd., 36116
334-288-0220, 1-800-441-7578
334-613-3455 (fax)
Counties: Autauga, Bullock, Chambers, Dallas, Elmore, Lee, Lowndes,
Macon, Montgomery, Russell, Tallapoosa, Wilcox

TUSCALOOSA

1305 37th St., East, 35405
205-554-1300
1-800-441-7597, 1-800-331-5562
205-554-1369 (fax)
Counties: Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Marengo, Marion,
Perry, Pickens, Sumter, Tuscaloosa, Walker, Winston

PEOPLE SERVED, PURCHASED SERVICES, 2004 GRANTS



PEOPLE SERVED

	Vocational Rehabilitation Service		Children's Rehabilitation Service	SAIL Service	Early Intervention System	Fiscal 2004
Counties	Served	Rehabilitated into employment	Served	Served	Served	Total Served
AUTAUGA	362	67	174	20	49	605
BALDWIN	891	181	316	43	111	1,361
BARBOUR	220	39	80	24	27	351
BIBB	189	41	46	17	27	279
BLOUNT	308	70	112	19	28	467
BULLOCK	105	9	47	4	13	169
BUTLER	211	41	82	20	8	321
CALHOUN	1,586	260	392	48	83	2,109
CHAMBERS	405	71	106	10	28	549
CHEROKEE	321	52	96	17	13	447
CHILTON	252	65	102	20	30	404
CHOCTAW	144	29	40	4	12	200
CLARKE	333	44	117	18	28	496
CLAY	221	38	38	14	8	281
CLEBURNE	149	38	58	4	13	224
COFFEE	410	65	102	22	19	553
COLBERT	501	94	124	12	39	676
CONECUH	187	36	48	9	11	255
COOSA	129	20	19	4	12	164
COVINGTON	426	83	148	32	20	626
CRENSHAW	146	26	48	17	4	215
CULLMAN	624	122	150	9	67	850
DALE	361	59	132	25	42	560
DALLAS	310	67	253	10	72	645
DeKALB	549	122	169	30	64	812
ELMORE	656	104	225	24	53	958
ESCAMBIA	309	37	70	17	28	424
ETOWAH	1,326	250	404	48	62	1,840
FAYETTE	189	35	59	9	36	293
FRANKLIN	301	32	71	12	16	400
GENEVA	143	19	66	12	19	240
GREENE	39	11	26	13	18	96
HALE	173	28	50	5	32	260
HENRY	97	12	46	3	18	164

PEOPLE SERVED

	Vocational Rehabilitation Service		Children's Rehabilitation Service	SAIL Service	Early Intervention System	Fiscal 2004
Counties	Served	Rehabilitated into employment	Served	Served	Served	Total Served
HOUSTON	849	180	272	48	98	1,267
JACKSON	658	144	112	18	36	824
JEFFERSON	7,702	1,379	870	203	643	9,418
LAMAR	134	19	49	8	33	224
LAUDERDALE	725	123	217	25	57	1,024
LAWRENCE	253	57	97	17	34	401
LEE	775	138	303	25	57	1,160
LIMESTONE	445	96	159	25	58	687
LOWNDES	132	21	77	3	20	232
MACON	187	42	89	4	14	294
MADISON	2,972	421	707	40	378	4,097
MARENGO	233	30	87	22	44	386
MARION	418	49	68	16	46	548
MARSHALL	836	148	260	25	65	1,186
MOBILE	3,480	642	1,479	186	379	5,524
MONROE	241	46	94	22	20	377
MONTGOMERY	2,132	370	929	90	273	3,424
MORGAN	980	220	286	24	91	1,381
PERRY	71	16	51	11	28	161
PICKENS	228	24	77	17	29	351
PIKE	309	56	112	12	43	476
RANDOLPH	223	45	45	11	19	298
RUSSELL	295	55	114	14	14	437
ST. CLAIR	540	92	111	29	53	733
SHELBY	1,366	171	198	28	167	1,759
SUMTER	137	23	36	16	31	220
TALLADEGA	961	196	197	37	59	1,254
TALLAPOOSA	431	65	103	16	22	572
TUSCALOOSA	2,252	375	457	75	287	3,071
WALKER	923	103	108	27	73	1,131
WASHINGTON	181	23	93	8	17	299
WILCOX	129	31	86	3	24	242
WINSTON	323	43	57	7	29	416
TOTALS	44,094	7,710	12,016	1,707	4,351	62,168

PURCHASED SERVICES

	Vocational Rehabilitation Service	Children's Rehabilitation Service	SAIL Service	Fiscal 2004
Counties	Expenditures	Expenditures	Expenditures	Total Expenditures
AUTAUGA	\$308,753.29	\$76,199.63	\$114,725.50	\$499,678.42
BALDWIN	649,623.86	205,573.01	238,027.31	1,093,224.18
BARBOUR	87,231.08	28,666.46	55,743.20	171,640.74
BIBB	181,115.50	103,593.83	46,810.05	331,519.38
BLOUNT	277,636.13	66,901.05	101,932.83	446,470.01
BULLOCK	30,344.39	30,778.72	3,089.93	64,213.04
BUTLER	137,259.42	27,872.37	39,596.84	204,728.63
CALHOUN	1,339,981.41	210,868.22	150,257.17	1,701,106.80
CHAMBERS	234,248.97	49,053.13	83,966.77	367,268.87
CHEROKEE	99,226.64	31,628.11	52,990.72	183,845.47
CHILTON	129,691.34	28,186.64	87,521.46	245,399.44
CHOCTAW	22,090.68	20,687.17	27,695.50	70,473.35
CLARKE	122,429.48	41,905.32	70,056.90	234,391.70
CLAY	33,358.36	10,692.41	30,510.65	74,561.42
CLEBURNE	112,258.36	45,117.50	13,811.24	171,187.10
COFFEE	198,537.24	40,596.69	74,152.66	313,286.59
COLBERT	271,411.75	102,618.27	44,604.31	418,634.33
CONECUH	110,625.37	12,093.09	21,054.90	143,773.36
COOSA	51,350.62	5,543.99	11,052.94	67,947.55
COVINGTON	245,856.18	52,000.04	96,848.71	394,704.93
CRENSHAW	71,608.24	21,128.87	47,910.29	140,647.40
CULLMAN	435,474.65	1,007,228.39	23,179.51	1,465,882.55
DALE	149,746.83	30,076.38	67,055.05	246,878.26
DALLAS	283,373.20	35,823.90	45,751.52	364,948.62
DeKALB	351,251.88	221,939.33	89,304.64	662,495.85
ELMORE	294,180.21	83,921.02	163,387.77	541,489.00
ESCAMBIA	106,755.26	14,418.93	56,517.37	177,691.56
ETOWAH	832,633.63	164,692.55	165,857.22	1,163,183.40
FAYETTE	95,823.18	16,721.22	46,086.23	158,630.63
FRANKLIN	148,100.41	27,622.06	52,797.73	228,520.20
GENEVA	70,277.27	27,780.99	68,429.23	166,487.49
GREENE	13,907.01	16,516.21	19,787.82	50,211.04
HALE	81,990.29	17,698.63	3,619.99	103,308.91
HENRY	37,862.26	9,455.40	14,543.40	61,861.06

PURCHASED SERVICES

	Vocational Rehabilitation Service	Children's Rehabilitation Service	SAIL Service	Fiscal 2004
Counties	Expenditures	Expenditures	Expenditures	Total Expenditures
HOUSTON	\$502,918.43	\$91,042.52	\$109,877.98	\$703,838.93
JACKSON	289,359.25	40,010.97	83,857.92	413,228.14
JEFFERSON	5,008,485.04	941,893.15	1,132,565.70	7,082,943.89
LAMAR	87,501.71	44,215.82	53,315.77	185,033.30
LAUDERDALE	385,095.45	420,807.04	111,025.70	916,927.59
LAWRENCE	178,302.22	69,752.54	65,702.16	313,756.92
LEE	663,711.85	329,148.51	172,116.03	1,164,976.39
LIMESTONE	209,539.96	78,374.02	74,038.55	361,952.53
LOWNDES	134,280.80	24,753.38	13,232.76	172,266.94
MACON	197,801.43	91,387.42	23,578.30	312,767.15
MADISON	1,488,061.30	365,719.05	154,717.17	2,008,497.52
MARENGO	150,822.63	26,514.98	24,670.00	202,007.61
MARION	232,815.05	55,386.47	78,070.43	366,271.95
MARSHALL	344,916.41	264,888.46	85,854.68	695,659.55
MOBILE	2,036,847.11	584,895.58	852,867.52	3,474,610.21
MONROE	108,086.25	52,948.89	89,464.24	250,499.38
MONTGOMERY	1,771,471.28	209,919.66	519,916.75	2,501,307.69
MORGAN	448,693.28	94,772.29	185,094.11	728,559.68
PERRY	56,921.50	8,809.77	24,763.19	90,494.46
PICKENS	53,865.66	26,661.61	70,803.27	151,330.54
PIKE	186,738.37	183,715.53	32,412.06	402,865.96
RANDOLPH	117,604.51	12,119.41	55,573.74	185,297.66
RUSSELL	165,487.84	60,589.87	98,125.35	324,203.06
ST. CLAIR	154,201.80	188,724.36	119,142.42	462,068.58
SHELBY	685,820.22	83,450.33	94,141.11	863,411.66
SUMTER	42,366.26	102,100.70	30,879.81	175,346.77
TALLADEGA	403,166.95	90,852.36	146,552.09	640,571.40
TALLAPOOSA	295,104.97	45,065.01	64,128.12	404,298.10
TUSCALOOSA	1,525,443.92	162,324.63	351,942.27	2,039,710.82
WALKER	590,616.77	140,342.86	58,871.85	789,831.48
WASHINGTON	49,760.38	25,090.67	33,561.00	108,412.05
WILCOX	78,804.94	12,515.32	3,348.89	94,669.15
WINSTON	138,570.27	24,586.44	28,841.28	191,997.99
TOTALS	\$26,399,198.20	\$7,838,979.15	\$7,271,728.98	\$41,509,906.33

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Because we value maximum acquisition and efficient and effective management of resources, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services continues to seek funding from state and federal sources to enable Alabama's children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential. The following are grant highlights from fiscal 2004.

Workforce Investment

In January 2001, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services was awarded an \$87,178.44 grant from the Youth Council of the Alabama Workforce Investment Board through the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs. This grant has been received each year. The purpose of the grant was to implement two initiatives: The Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) and the Transition Weekend program. The mission of these programs was to develop independence, self-advocacy, leadership, and career/employment skills in all students with disabilities participating in the two programs.

The Youth Leadership Forum is an innovative, intensive five-day residential career leadership-training program for high school students with disabilities. Program activities focus on career planning, leadership development, community resources, technology resources, and information on disability history. YLF encourages each student participant to reach his or her full potential. Each student participant develops a personal career and leadership plan to be implemented when the participant returns to his or her home community.

Transition Weekend is a highly structured, though casual, weekend program designed to assist students who are blind or significantly visually impaired and their families in planning for the students' future independence and career. Participants receive information about programs, technology and services specifically designed for adults who are blind or visually impaired as well as other appropriate community support services and resources available. Students and their families also receive information about vocational rehabilitation services for individuals who are blind or visually impaired and resources and services available through the Alabama Career Center System. Facilitated assessment and individual planning activities result in each student developing a personal career choice and career and independence action plan to be linked, as appropriate, to each student's school Individualized Educational Program (IEP) and vocational rehabilitation Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) in his home community. Planning for post-secondary education and lifelong learning also result.

The grant award increased in 2004 to \$157,146. This increase allowed the employment of a support services coordinator who provides support to both programs. The increase also funded a reunion of past YLF participants. ADRS and ADECA are proud of this collaborative effort.

Another WIA-funded grant awarded by Mobile Works, the WIA administrator for the Mobile Service Delivery Area, placed eight high school students with hearing or visual impairments in worksites beginning in July 2002. The summer of 2003, ADRS enrolled 10 high school students in summer jobs such as computer repair assistance, landscaping, warehousing, clerical aide, assembly, recreation aide, and food service. In 2004, students included those who participated two years ago and who were moving on to college or permanent employment. Many of these students obtained the work hours necessary for the Alabama Occupational Diploma.

The WIA grant provides funds for 10 program participants to be paid \$5.15 an hour plus workman's compensation for up to 40 hours full-time summer employment for 10 weeks for approximately 400 hours per student. These wages total \$20,680 and are listed as direct costs. The cost of transportation, contract interpreters and job coaches to instruct in job skills training for each of the 10 participants is also included in the grant total of \$32,130. With the end of our third summer work experience, many students gained important knowledge, experience, and work references. Some worksites plan to hire their student worker after high school graduation. Some students discovered the types of jobs they were not interested in and found permanent jobs with other employers.

Welfare-to-Work Program (under the Work Force Investment Act)

The Welfare-To-Work Program (WTW) was terminated effective January 2004. The Alabama Department of Economic Affairs extended the WTW Program under the Work Force Investment Act (WIA) for a period of July 1, 2004, through June 30, 2005. This grant amount was for \$2 million and allows ADRS to provide services to WIA-eligible consumers in such areas as counseling, job development, training and job placement. Currently, the grant covers 47 counties in Alabama and is staffed by 13 counselors and an administrative assistant. Consumers are referred by ADRS, the Department of Human Resources (DHR), the one-stop career centers in Alabama, and other community agencies.

Project MAPS (Mapping Access to Program Services)

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs,

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Office of Workforce Development, and ADRS were awarded a Work Incentive Grant by the Department of Labor in the amount of \$600,000. The grant will facilitate a system change for improving access to workforce development services for people with disabilities by improving outcomes in terms of program participation and suitable employment. The grant will employ a staff of four regional career system facilitators to accomplish the following goals:

- Develop a staff of four regional facilitators to participate in the on-going evaluation of One-Stop Career Center services to determine strengths and weaknesses in the state
- Share information gathered with all partner agencies and initiate action to overcome deficiencies
- Train all One-Stop Career Center partners to better identify and serve people with disabilities so they have better access to One-Stop services
- Improve physical and program access to services for people with disabilities
- Participate in the statewide electronic linkage system initiative for uniform referral and follow-up procedure
- Use project efforts to design a Disability Program Navigator to complement the existing VR program

Project partners include:

- Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS)
- Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)
- Alabama Department of Industrial Relations (DIR)
- Alabama Department of Post-secondary Education (DPE)
- Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR)

It is anticipated that the efforts of this grant will result in an increase in the number of people with disabilities identified and served through the one-stop centers and obtain access to a wider variety of training and assessment options available through the partners represented in the Career Center System.

In-Service Training

This \$159,744 grant from the Rehabilitation Services Administration plus \$15,974 in state matching monies enabled the department to provide professional development and training opportunities to staff members. Staff training is linked to specific job tasks that enhance employee job performance in providing services to people with disabilities.

This year was the fourth in a five-year grant funding cycle. Beginning in October of 2000, the grant included additional funding specifically for the purpose of establishing a

videoconference system to enhance our technology capabilities for training.

ADRS was the first department in Alabama's state government to have this specific ability of linking all of the department's offices statewide. During the first year, 10 conference rooms were equipped with cameras and monitors as well as 14 office cameras. The initial funding year also provided necessary funds for enhancing the department's computer network and infrastructure capabilities, making it possible for the audio-visual technology to work without compromising the flow of data necessary for our case-management and financial systems. During 2002, 21 desktop cameras were added to the network's system as well as enhanced cables and software to accommodate additional cameras and users. Technology was also purchased to allow our system to become integrated with colleges, universities and other agencies nationally and internationally.

During 2003, the department purchased equipment that integrates archived and "real-time" servers. These servers are capable of giving ADRS staff the advantage of "training on demand" when their schedule and work load permit and from the convenience of their desktop computers. They also allow staff to participate in "real-time" training that takes place in other offices in the state without the expense of time and travel.

The funding for the videoconference system is for the purpose of providing training to staff, connecting offices around the state for conference and meeting purposes and to allow the opportunity for distance education, linking college and university programs to staff attending post-graduate programs. This funding level will continue for the entire five years of the grant's funding cycle that ends in 2005.

Hemophilia

Children's Rehabilitation Service (CRS) receives a grant from Hemophilia of Georgia. The total amount of the grant monies, funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, is \$28,700.

The Alabama Hemophilia Program (AHP), administered through CRS, uses funding from this grant to provide comprehensive, culturally sensitive, family-centered care and services to Alabama residents with bleeding disorders. Special efforts are made to include traditionally underserved populations, such as persons living in rural areas, minorities, women and adolescents. Additionally, funding is used in efforts to provide outreach and education to people with bleeding disorders, medical providers, school personnel, and other community-based agencies.

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STAR (Statewide Technology Access and Response)

The Statewide Technology Access and Response (STAR) System for Alabamians with Disabilities is Alabama's technology-related assistance project.

In FY 2004, this program:

- provided advocacy and/or technical information assistance to approximately 3,100 consumers and approximately 500 professionals through TechNet, a grassroots group comprised entirely of consumers
- continued its expansion of the Recycling Program to CRS programs receiving services from rehabilitation technology specialists
- provided technology-related assessments and recommendations to staff as well as other non-consumers
- provided assistive device service to 284 ADRS consumers
- provided engineering design services to 67 ADRS consumers
- evaluated 258 distinct ADRS consumers for assistive technology
- provided one or more services to 332 ADRS consumers

Technology Loan Closet (TLC)

The Technology Loan Closet (TLC), located in the Anniston Children's Rehabilitation Service Office, is a lending library for assistive technology. It is funded through a local foundation grant. During fiscal year 2004, Anniston CRS staff worked with 65 consumers, parents, local school staff, and public/private therapy professionals as well as others to lend some 90 pieces of assistive technology. Those receiving TLC services include individuals from a nine-county area around Anniston, Talladega and Gadsden. CRS staff plan to seek additional funding in FY '05 to update and enhance the existing technology in TLC so they can be even more responsive to consumer requests.

Learning to Impact Future Experiences (LIFE Project)

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services was awarded a \$604,116.25 grant from the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) to provide transition services to deaf and hard-of-hearing youths. The purpose of this initiative is to develop and implement a collaborative leadership and career development program for eligible 14- to 21-year-old high school students who are deaf or hard of hearing and living within the Alabama Workforce Investment Area.

This initiative is a collaborative effort involving the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, Alabama School for the

Deaf, Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Jacksonville State University, and the Janice Capilouto Center for the Deaf-Easter Seal. The program consists of three components: transition to independence and employment (job readiness training and work experience), transition workshops for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and their parents, and leadership workshops for students who are deaf and hard of hearing. Approximately 464 students in 59 Alabama counties have been referred to this project since the original grant was awarded in January 2002. Students are served through this initiative with a goal of identifying and providing all deaf and hard-of-hearing students in Alabama an opportunity to gain work experience and to access the support needed to ensure academic and employment success. As part of this initiative, ADRS has also established a Transition Committee made up of stakeholders involved in transition services for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Independent Living Service

A grant of \$293,902 from Rehabilitation Services Administration allowed Independent Living Service to provide independent living skills training, advocacy, peer support and information and referral to 488 clients across the state. These services are provided by independent living specialists. The services provided are monitored quarterly by the State Independent Living Council (SILC) which develops a plan for Independent Living Service every three years.

In addition to providing direct services, the independent living specialists work closely with community organizations in order to ensure access to and local community support for independent living services for clients in communities across the state.

Supported Employment

Alabama used \$526,845 funding from the State Grant Supported Employment Program, formerly known as Title 6-C money, along with other Title I money to fund 29 supported employment agencies across the state. These agencies continued to provide services under Milestones, an outcome-based payment system. More than 500 individuals were referred to these 29 agencies for supported employment. Of this number, 366 obtained competitive employment and 306 were successfully closed. Individuals working as a result of their participation in supported employment averaged more than 22 hours per week and earned an average hourly wage of \$5.78 per hour.

Training opportunities continue to be available to all staff

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working in supported employment. Two sessions of “Best Practices in Supported Employment” training, conducted by consultants from Virginia Commonwealth University, were held. Approximately 100 individuals participated in this training. This training will continue to be offered two times per year. The annual supported employment conference held in August had the largest attendance since the conferences began in 1998. Approximately 300 people attended the conference. Local and national consultants presented a variety of training throughout the conference.

The quality of supported employment continues to improve in Alabama. Four additional agencies will provide supported employment services in FY 2005. Currently, more than 600 individuals are being followed in long-term support across the state.

State of Alabama Client Assistance Program (SACAP)

This \$174,496 grant from the U.S. Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration is the sole funding source for the State of Alabama Client Assistance Program. SACAP is an advocacy service that works cooperatively with Vocational Rehabilitation Service to assist people who have questions about problems with their vocational rehabilitation program. SACAP assisted 24 individuals in fiscal year 2004.

ADRS Alabama Work Incentives Network (ALA-WIN)

The ALA-WIN grant is currently in its fourth year of a five-year period. ADRS receives \$300,000 a year to provide services to 51 Alabama counties. ADRS currently has benefits specialists in Mobile, Dothan, Montgomery, Tuscaloosa, and Huntsville as well as a referral coordinator in Montgomery. These specialists work with people in benefit status receiving Social Security Disability and/or supplemental Security Income. They provide information on how wages will affect benefits. During FY 2004, more than 8,000 contacts were made with people in benefit status through group presentations and one-on-one counseling sessions. Alabama became a Ticket-to-Work state under the new Social Security legislation in November 2003. Because of this legislation, benefits specialists are now helping even more people to return to work. Already, in less than a year, more than 1,000 people have chosen to use their tickets to return to work.

Traumatic Brain Injury

In 2004, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

was awarded another \$100,000 by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau in the form of a Health Resources and Services Administration Post-Demonstration grant for the purpose of developing a model program of care for people acquiring a traumatic brain injury due to domestic violence. The program will (1) identify those sustaining a TBI because of domestic violence; (2) provide education of social dynamic issues; (3) provide awareness of TBI services; and (4) develop successful approaches for domestic violence intervention. Project partners include: Alabama Head Injury Foundation, Alabama Head Injury Task Force, Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence, YWCA Domestic Violence Services-Birmingham, Advisory Council on Violence Against Women, UAB Traumatic Brain Injury Model System, and UAB Injury Control Research Center. With shared collaboration of the project partners, the project will:

- establish ongoing collaborative relationships between TBI and domestic violence service providers;
- develop training models for acute intervention and long-term counseling for domestic service providers to enhance treatment outcomes of women acquiring a TBI because of domestic violence;
- develop a consumer-focused video and literature explaining the TBI service system to facilitate the survivor's access to the TBI service system;
- train TBI system staff to recognize and effectively serve domestic violence-TBI consumers;
- provide a training program series on issues of TBI and domestic violence for shelter staff using a TBI Training Tool Kit;
- develop and provide training, in collaboration with the Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence, for legal professionals and justice system staff; and
- contribute to systems change through influencing legislative initiatives and public policy.

MOCCE (Maximizing Opportunities for Customized Competitive Employment)

In 2002, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services' State of Alabama Independent Living (SAIL) Service a one-year \$150,000 grant which was extended and completed in June 2004. The grant, entitled Maximizing Opportunities for Customized Employment (MOCCE), was for the purpose of identifying barriers to employment throughout the state for people with severe disabilities. During FY '04, collaboration with the Alabama Medicaid Agency, the Alabama Department of Public Health,

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Senior Services, and Mental Health/Mental Retardation made it possible to reach the severely disabled population throughout Alabama. Participants from the Homebound and Independent Living program completed surveys that identified the major barriers to employment. Information gathered from the surveys led to the development of strategies that helped alleviate the barriers to employment for this population. Grant funds were used to create pamphlets and posters that provide a toll-free telephone number for persons with severe disabilities or their families to call to learn more about work incentives and employment. Grant funds were also used for the development of a manual for professionals working with severely disabled persons which addresses employment-related issues. Overall, the MOCCE grant fostered a customized employment philosophy for persons with severe disabilities.

ACE (Alabama Customized Employment)

The \$164,769 five-year ACE grant awarded in 2003 and funded by the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy is comprised of three working components whose overall purpose is to provide employment opportunities for the most severely disabled. The three components – the Janice Capilouto Center for the Deaf-Easter Seals, Central Alabama Easter Seals, and the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services' State of Alabama Independent Living (SAIL) Service – each provide similar, but different programs funded by the grant.

The ADRS SAIL program is responsible for the demonstration of customization in the One-Stop Career Center in Anniston and in Montgomery. The customized employment specialists hired by the grant in each of these service areas work to customize employment opportunities in each area for persons with severe disabilities and to identify barriers related to grant activities. During FY '04 some 51 program participants in these two areas received customized employment opportunities, which included job development and placement services.

Grant funds are also being used to educate the One-Stop Center and the Career Link staff about employment-related issues for persons with severe disabilities.

Accessibility surveys have been conducted in 14 of the 28 one-stop career centers in the state to ascertain and analyze information which will lead to easier access to the centers and the programs they offer for the population who seek their services. The ACE goal is to complete surveys on all One-Stop and satellite centers throughout Alabama in an effort to create greater accessibility to these sites and their programs for persons with disabilities.





In the provision of services and in employment practices, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, creed, national origin, religion, age or disability. This material is available in alternate format upon request.